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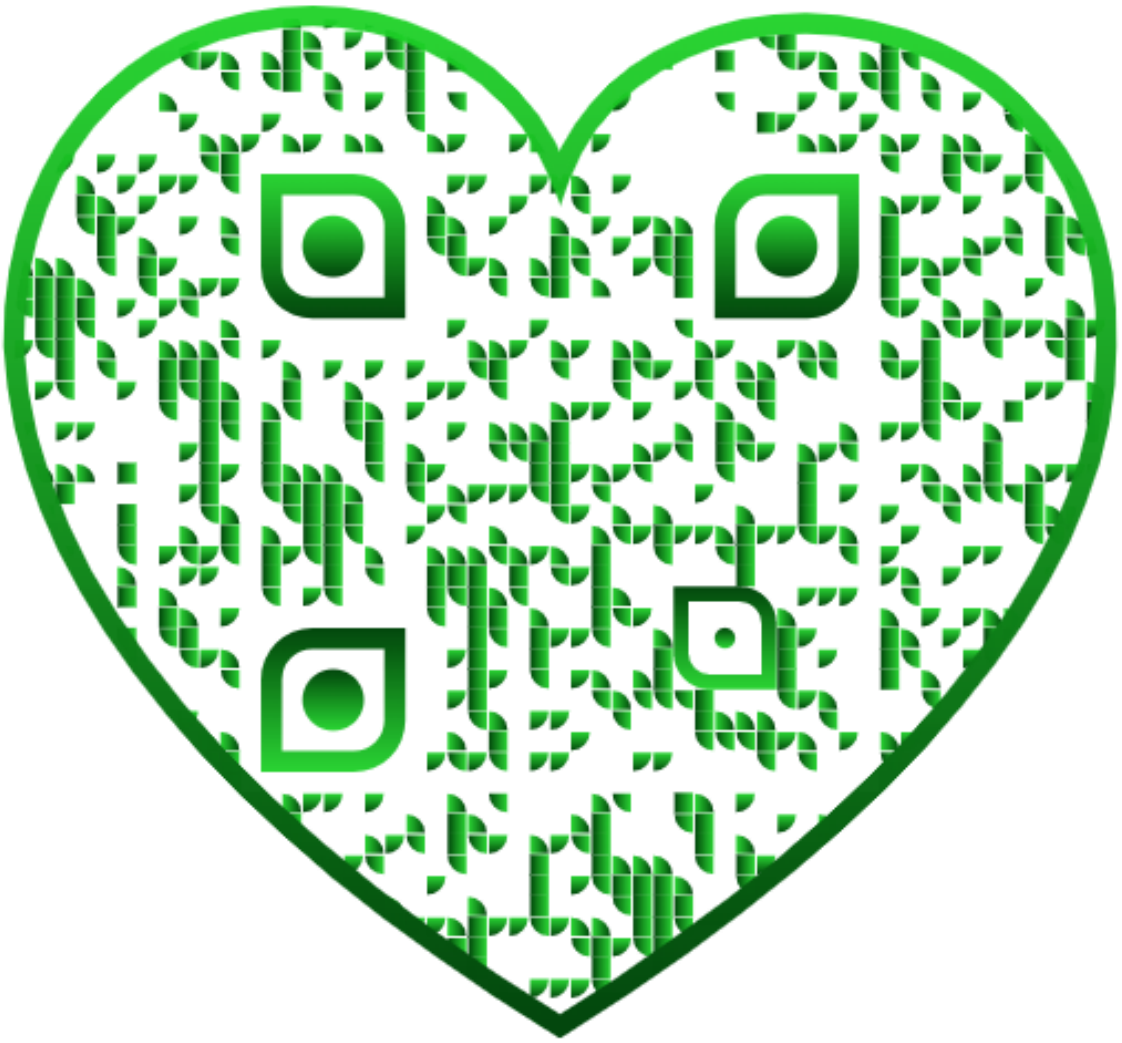

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"I listened to 'God Only Knows' over and over, sat down at my Wurlitzer and wrote 'Think Of Rain'"

welcome

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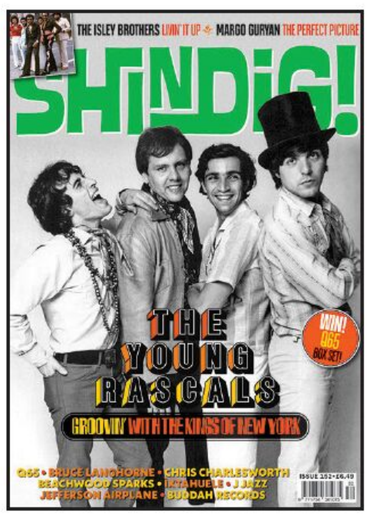

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Hello Readers,

Happy June. It's crazy to think that we're six months into 2024. But let's forget about everything else, if only for an hour or so.

This time around there's something for everyone. Whether that's the '60s splendour of The Young Rascals and Jefferson Airplane or the Black rock, soul and funk of The Isley Brothers' second coming, Q65's dirty, hairy Dutch strangeness, Margo Guryan's breathy majesty, or the latest from Beachwood Sparks. I don't think we've offered such a varied spread in a while. And that's the beauty of what we do. Quite often, an issue writes itself. It only takes a new box set, an obscure vinyl reissue or first-time release of an unearthed acetate, a venerable character writing a book, and of course, all of the great new bands and artists making waves.

To be honest, I've hardly listened to old records over the past month, living on a diet of Amelia Coburn, The Lemon Twigs and Hollow Hand. Yesterday, I decided to play the back catalogue of '70s pop/rock/prog/folk-rock lads Home. And that is how I roll. I'm sure you often operate in the same way. We're lucky that we have so much music behind us and ahead of us to escape in.

Interviewing Chris Charlesworth really made me consider the importance of writing about music and supporting current artists. It also made me consider the need for historical pieces, celebrating artists and records that otherwise may become forgotten by subsequent generations. Sure, the days of rock and pop publications selling millions each week is behind us, but our work is still crucial. A blog or social post can't nurture tomorrow's talent or honour yesterday's legends. Music has become a single entity where the old and new coexist like never before.

Please support all we do. Music matters.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills,
Editor-In-Chief

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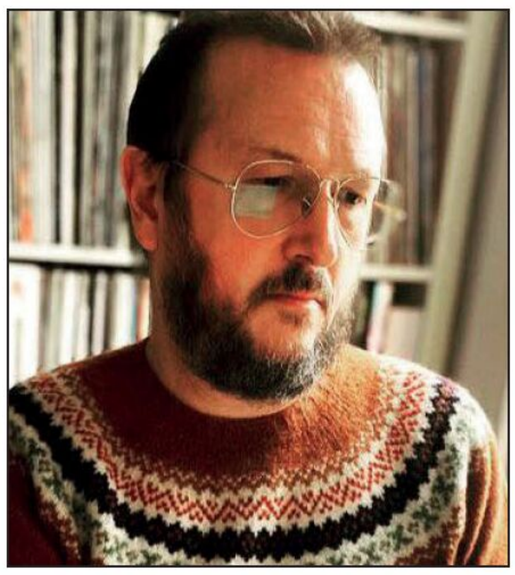

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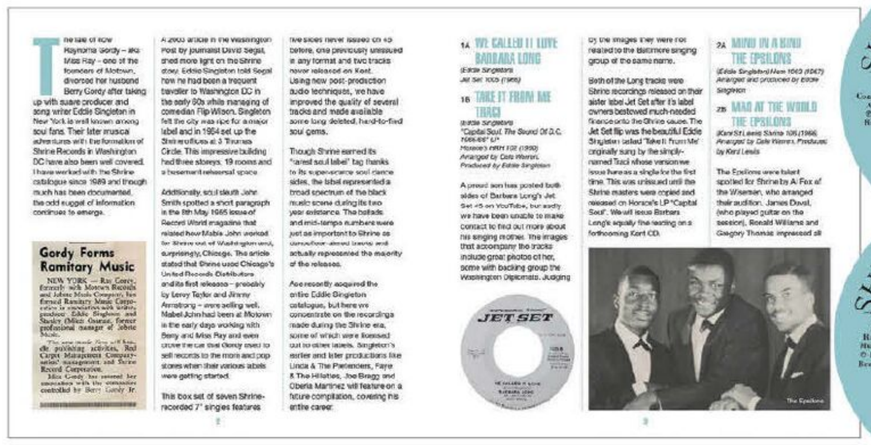
Andy Morten's former band Bronco Bullfrog's catalogue has been reissued on vinyl by Guerssen. Head here to order: guerssen.com/artist/bronco-bullfrog/

New releases: June 2024

Shrine Records Rare Soul Sides: Washington DC 1965-1967

LTDBOX 021 7x7" Box

Set up by Eddie Singleton with Berry Gordy's ex-wife and co-founder of Motown, Raynoma (Miss Ray) in 1964, the Shrine label, based in Washington DC, has been a buzzword for collectors for over fifty years. Here we present seven new Shrine 45s in a box set, with a fully illustrated booklet packed with rare photos. Soul heaven!



ALSO AVAILABLE:

Jon Savage's The Secret Public How The LGBTQ+ Aesthetic Shaped Pop Culture 1955-1979

CDTOP2 1647

From rock'n'roll to disco, the soundtrack to Jon Savage's book about the LGBTQ+ influence on pop culture.

Jon Savage's 1966: The Year The Decade Exploded
CDTOP2 1452 -

Jon Savage's 1967: The Year Pop Divided
CDTOP2 1495

Jon Savage's 1965: The Year The Sixties Ignited
CDTOP2 1513

Jon Savage's 1969-1971: Rock Dreams On 45
CDTOP2 1559

Jon Savage's 1972-1976
CDTOP2 1594

Jon Savage's 1977-1979 Symbols Clashing Everywhere
CDTOP2 1610

Jon Savage's 1980-1982 The Art Of Things To Come
CDTOP2 1625

Jon Savage's 1983-1985 Welcome To Techno City
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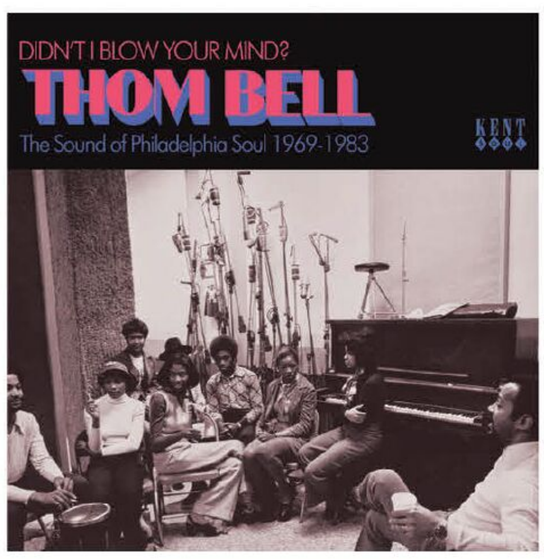
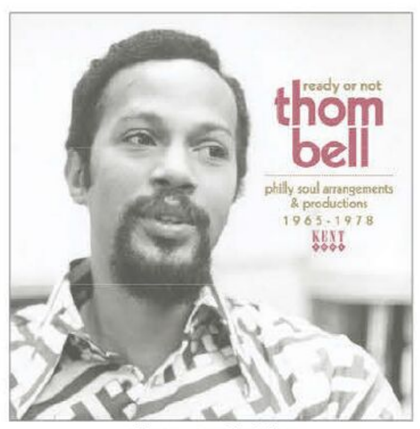
Jon Savage's 1965-1968: The High Sixties On 45
XXQLP2 060



Thom Bell Didn't I Blow Your Mind? The Sound Of Philadelphia Soul 1969 – 1983

CDTOP 522

As the prime mover in creating the Philadelphia Sound, Thom Bell was one of the most influential figures in the history of R&B and soul music. With orchestral pop arrangers Burt Bacharach and Teddy Randazzo as guides he didn't lack confidence and used ornate, highly unusual instrumentation – French horns, chimes, oboes – predicting a sound that would boss 70's soul.



Also available:
Ready Or Not - Thom Bell's Philly Soul Arrangements & Productions 1965-1978
CDTOP 488

BGP are excited to launch their new 7s at 33 series which aims to deliver classic album length tracks in their full length on 7-inch singles.

Charles Earland Murilley / Leaving The Planet

BGPS 074

Leaving This Planet' was played at the Loft and other New York dance clubs in the 70s. Here it is coupled with 'Murilley', an organ led vocal number that was a massive jazz dancer at the Wag Club, Dingwalls and beyond in the 80s.

Patrice Rushen Haw-Right Now / Kickin' Back

BGPS 078

'Haw-Right Now' is a monster track, from Patrice Rushen's 1974 debut LP "Prelusion". It is backed by the chunky jazz funk of 'Kickin' Back' –originally released in 1976 as an early 12 inch single on the back of club plays.

thoughts&words

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STAR LETTER

ANKLE CRUNCHING WAH-WAH

Hi Jon and all of the *Shindig!* team,

I'm a little late writing this but just had to say massive congratulations on 150 issues, and in particular the 150th issue itself. What could easily have been a glibly self-referential "cheesefest" was an expertly judged celebration of not only your achievements and the music and eras that feed the magazine, but also the form itself and was, as a result, one of the most interesting issues yet for me.

Month on month recently I've felt a stirring to write in. Stirred but nothing shaking. Until now. What I was moved to do was single out two areas for praise that I thought were maybe going a little unheralded. The first is the artwork. There are of course those striking covers and the by-now iconic *Shindig!* masthead, but I'm talking more about the intro spread to each of the main features. Just like we all know an album cover can add to the impact a record has and the esteem in which it's held, so too the lead page of a big article should perfectly represent its subject. And I have to say that over the last few years, they have become more and more splendid in every way. Every time I think the typeface well must be bone dry by now, you prove me wrong.

I thought I'd be congratulating a specific art department until reading issue #150 and the 20 questions piece where you suggest the pictures are as much your domain as the words. Credit wherever it's due, it's a sumptuous look the magazine has knocked into shape over the years.

I'd also been wanting to suggest you could show a little more of yourselves in the magazine. I don't mean literally! Well, unless you happen to want to, of course – it's your organ! I remember when you had an in-house debate over "What is psychedelia?" – that I found very intriguing, so more of this would be pleasing to my eyes at least. That was another reason why issue #150 was such a pearl, because there was that extra insight from (and into) the creative forces behind this monthly thing we all cherish.

It's easy from the remove of readership to congratulate the 150-up without really dwelling too deeply on what it must have taken to go from those seven issues in the first 11 years, to being a monthly fixture 19 years later, ever-evolving, ever-horizon broadening, and refusing to rest on its laurels. And I really do think that's commendable. I might have missed some, but from those gorgeous montage pages in #150 of all the issues so far, I count only 10 distinct acts repeated on the covers (oh go on then – make me name them: Love, The Byrds, The Kinks, The Move, The Pretty Things, Neil Young, Bowie, The Stones, The Small Faces, The Yardbirds). And that's courageous, given the evident path of least resistance being trod by other monthlies (shall we call them *Mo-Cut* just for a gas), with their as-many-different-cover-acts-as-there-are-months-in-a-year strategy. Although I'm actually somewhat torn on this – do they give sterling service to people newly coming to this music? Just because I've read about the rise and fall of Ziggy Stardust umpteen times in their pages over the years, doesn't mean everyone has. Or are they just boring and repetitious as umpteen of their readers write in and accuse them of each year? I'm sure it's way less simplistic than I imagine – which returns me to my point, about all the obstacles, hard graft, self-doubt and moments of near-throwing in the towel that I reckon your route to where you are now (I refuse to use the "j" word - yuk!) has encompassed. Anyone who has ever tried to get anything off the ground and sustain it will know how thankless it can seem at times, and how tested the belief in it can become. So I really think achievement is the word. Miracle might be another.

The second area I was going to call out was the record reviews. Describing sounds with words – hmm, no easy task! And furthermore, in most cases with very limited space in which to do it, so what to do? It's hard to put my finger on, but when I read a review in *Shindig!* I feel like the wily record store owner you compared yourself to in the issue #151 editorial is describing to me a sonic land contained within that album, in terms my ears will understand and find completely seductive or think maybe I won't make the expedition after all. Do ears think? I'd say they do! So then, exactly what a record review should do. But when I read them in the likes of *Mo-Cut*, I sometimes feel only that a journalist is trying to tell me how much he or she knows. A fine art, clearly. So genuinely – well done! (I will never forget as long as I live the phrase "ankle-crunching wah-wah").

There is actually a third thing – and that's how much of a truly trustworthy companion *Shindig!* has become. For example, were I to have written in when I intended, and were I to have done like many others do and requested a piece on bands close to my heart but whose backstories I knew next to nothing about, I may well have included Q65 and The Humblebums in the list. I wouldn't have had to wait long, would I? Issue #151 to be precise. So I won't do that. What I'll do instead is give you my "Fantasy *Shindig!* Unlikely Cover Artists" – you know, those potentially divisive ones where you find the *Shindig!*-pertinent angle. Ready? These are all genuine loves of mine, who I'm very protective over – all pleasure, no guilt. Elvis Presley, ABBA, Prince, Rufus Wainwright, Enya.

I wrote in once before, and included a drawing of you, Jon. I've spared you that embarrassment this time.

Sincere congratulations once again for the milestone, it's been a pleasure to be with you all the way since the Country Joe & The Fish cover issue. I'll keep preaching the *Shindig!* gospel to anyone who'll listen (especially when that ABBA cover issue comes out).

All the very best

Jason Boyle

Man, oh man, Jason. Struck for words. A copy of Rain's excellent Tomorrow Never Comes: The NYC Sessions 1967-1968 *will be on its way, care of the excellent Grapefruit*

Issue #150 celebrates the past

INSIDE LOOKING OUT

Jon,

Further to my story on The Animals being STOMPED in 1966 I dug out what the head of Canadian Capitol Records, Paul White released. Unfortunately, he did not have the North American rights & MGM had these items deleted.

'The House Of The Rising Sun' 45 is the same length as the British release, 4:28 minutes whereas the MGM release is only two minutes. That gives MGM another screwup. Note that I still have my ticket stub from the Maple Leaf Stadium.

Thanks,

Don Hargrove

Hi Jon,

What a poignant touch to list Rare Bird's 'Sympathy' on the Shindiggin list – should we be amazed that so little has changed since 'Sympathy' laid bare the main issues facing humanity, plus we are now attuned to the environmental issues too. I thought The Animals article rates up there with the best that *Shindig!* has delivered as regards the non-glamorous side of the Music Industry. The 'Yesterday's Paper' was another treat. As someone who suffered greatly from "Black Hands Thursdays" when the music press produced its weekly editions.

Thanks,

Richard Gould

Cheers for the info Don. And thanks for the kind words about our excellent Animals piece and further comments. About the heads and hippys getting it right, say no more Richard.

CLOSING THE GAP

Hi Jon,

Congratulations on 30 years of *Shindig!* A brief comment on Kris Needs' piece about the pre-*Shindig!* music press, though...

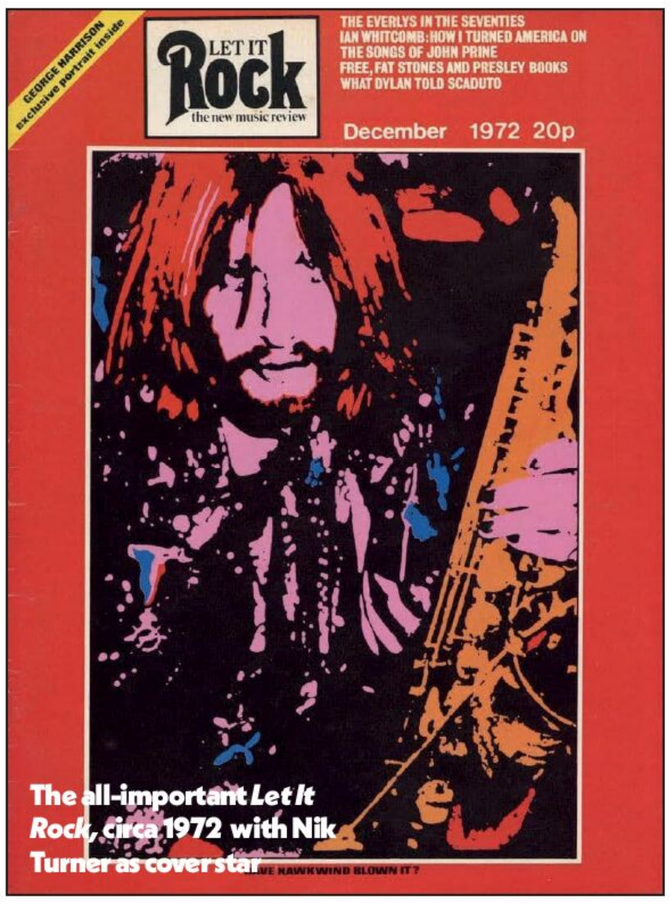
Needs is absolutely right about *Zigzag*'s importance, but his piece had some surprising gaps. *Blues & Soul*, for instance, and *Beat Instrumental* – always a good source of information and comment even if you couldn't play a note. *Folk Roots* ought to have been worth a mention, so too *Music Now*, *Street Life*, *Collusion* and even *The Face*, which I personally never liked but certainly did influence the mainstream music papers at the time. And I'm not sure how many of the US publications Kris covered were actually available in your local provincial Smiths or anywhere outside London, more's the pity. As a student in Nottingham in the '70s, I always had to wait until I was in the smoke to go to a newsstand on Charing Cross Road to buy a copy of *Rolling Stone*.

But Kris's big omissions were surely *Let it Rock* and its short-lived predecessor, *Cream* (that's *Cream* with an "a", not the American *Creem*). Okay, I'm biased, having written for both, but *Let it Rock*, in particular, had good writers like Charlie Gillett, John Pidgeon, Phil Hardy, Simon Frith, Mick Gold and Mary Harron. Running monthly from 1972 to '75, it pioneered the idea of probing into rock history and celebrating lost figures and overlooked records, as well as championing the best of the new stuff, which is exactly what *Shindig!* does 50 years later. When those massive *Story Of Pop* and *History Of Rock* partworks appeared in the '70s and '80s, around half of the writers involved were ex-*Let It Rock*ers. It was eclectic, too: ace session man/producer Pete Wingfield contributed a soul column every month, Karl Dallas looked after the folk side and Mike Leadbitter and Tony Russell covered blues. We even had Lester Bangs interviewing Slade in one issue. The only real blind spot was progressive rock, but that reflected the tastes (prejudices?) and I suppose the age of the writers involved.

Let It Rock had a bizarre history, for sure, and was always short of money. At one point the publisher's advertising manager tried to persuade a writers' meeting that the mag needed to transform itself into a men's magazine "with some music content on the side". After that we writers, in very right-on '70s fashion, bought the title and formed a co-operative to run it ourselves. Circulation peaked in '74, if I remember rightly, and hit a dizzying 20,000 when we put Elvis on the cover.

All the best,

Stephen Barnard



The all-important *Let It Rock*, circa 1972 with Nik Turner as coverstar

Hi Jon,

Another excellent issue. Congrats for those years at the helm.

I was slightly disappointed that in the feature on other music mags back then, the only folk titles included were both American. There were lots of good British ones – including a certain one which began in 1979 and ran for 40 years with the same editor (and the proud boast of publishing every single issue on time, all 425 of them!). Ahem!

Best,

Ian A Anderson

Hello Jon & Co,

I've been a subscriber for some time now and there's something about *Shindig!* that makes it apparent it's a real labour of love producing each issue. When done we're all invited to the party, so to speak. It's the magazine equiv'lent of your mate coming round that you haven't seen for a few weeks and catching up with what's happening.

Issue #150 for me was yet another great issue. I particularly liked the 'My Back Pages' and 'Yesterdays Papers' pieces. Regarding the latter, perhaps an honourable mention could be made for *Jamming* magazine, which I think I'm correct in saying started out in similar fashion to *Shindig!* and later developed into a professionally printed and distributed publication before folding in around 1985. There's maybe a couple of others from that period, but I mention *Jamming* as I was an avid reader at the time.

Regards,

Graham King

Hi Jon,

A great issue to celebrate 30 years. However, Kris Needs was very remiss, if not negligent, in his list of fanzines in not mentioning the two that emanated from Scotland.

The wonderful Brian Hogg's *Bam Balam* – that ran to 14 issues from 1975 to '82 and contained meticulously researched discographies – was a boon in the pre internet years for those of us trying to find out more about the bands we had discovered on the original *Nuggets* album.

Equally good was Bert Muirhead's *Hot Wacks*, which ran to 23 issues from '74 to '83, and mined the same territory as *Zigzag* but did have special issues devoted to particular artists, there were ones on Spirit and Jan & Dean, were very informative.

Keep up the good work.

Best Wishes,

Pat Curran

Mr Needs responds: "This was a massive task to take on and, as I had limited space and time to write it, mainly featured publications I remembered that, most crucially, had some broad relevance to Shindig!*'s ethos and fanzine origins. I'd have needed half the issue to cover them all. Having said that,* Beat Instrumental *and* Let It Rock *were on my list as I used to get both, so no idea what happened there!" Thanks for the comments chaps. Kris had a big job, so I do hope you'll forgive the odd title he missed.*

SHINDIG!

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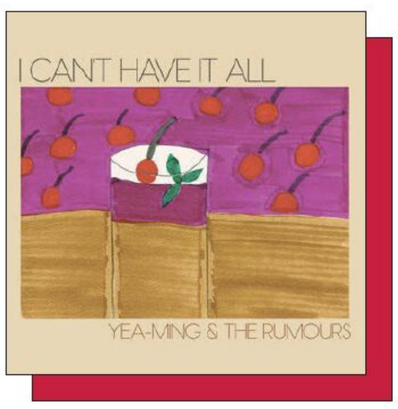
shindiggin'

What's HOT on the Shindig! turntable

The brand new releases, compilation standouts, old album tracks and dusty 45s rockin' our world this month



YEA-MING & THE RUMOURS
I Can't Have It All

Yea-Ming Chen combines a little bit country and a little bit rock 'n' roll on her third album fronting The Rumours. While a melancholic pastoral bent tints much of the album, the lap steel flourishes and strident feminist fist pumping add a vibrant energetic burst to the laid-back dreamaways. We particularly like the title track which induces a dreamy, Mazzy Star atmosphere over a perky pop backing that Camera Obscura do so well. The rest of the album is equally brilliant.

Available on: I Can't Have It All (DANDY BOY LP)

AMELIA COBURN
See Saw

Between The Moon And The Milkman has barely left the turntable (and AirPods whilst walking the dog) at *Shindig!* Towers and its wooded surrounds for the past month. As the world goes to hell in a handcart (although things in the UK at least show promise), Coburn's sweet childlike purity and folkloric storytelling, and Bill Ryder-Jones' utterly ageless production offer pure escapism. 'See Saw' inhabits a space somewhere between Basil Kirchin's 'I Start Counting' and Trish Keenan's spooky nursery rhymes.

Available on: Between The Moon And The Milkman (QUIET CROWN LP)

FANNY
Hey Bulldog

As the '70s dawned a quartet of women signed to a major label and released four under-appreciated albums full of funky soul, gorgeous pop ballads, and heavy rock bangers. With more insults than applause hurled at them, they honed their skills on gruelling road trips and gradually turned those doubting frowns into approving smiles, with David Bowie among others soon singing their praises. Two performances on Germany TV show *Beat Club* that have been gaining more fans via YouTube are now commercially available. They demonstrate the band's ferocious attack on tracks like this stomping cover, complete with Lennon-approved extra verse.

Available on: Live On Beat Club 71-72 (REAL GONE MUSIC LP)

JESÚS ACOSTA & THE PROFESSIONALS
Theme From The Godfather

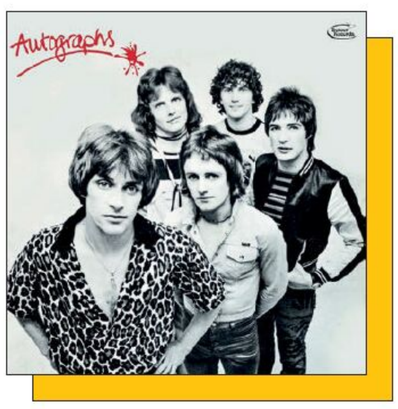
Sure, it's been compiled before, plenty of times – and sampled repeatedly. But if we ever become too jaded to enjoy this deliciously relaxed four minutes of Hammond organ, Mariachi horns, tremolo guitar, and the rhythm section that caught the ear of RZA, Mos Def, Madlib et al – not to mention those glorious 'Dharmatma'-esque clanging fuzz chords – then please put us out to pasture. What composer Nino Rota thought of this interpretation of his best-known movie theme may be lost to time, but this is undoubtedly the standout track on Numero's latest compilation, out at the end of June.

Available on: Shanghai'd Soul Episode 12 (NUMERO GROUP LP)

NANCY SINATRA
Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down)

The dream team of Nancy Sinatra, producer Lee Hazlewood and arranger Billy Strange works miracles on their stunning transformation of Sonny Bono's classic song of betrayal and abandonment. The drama played out in the lyrics is heightened by the starkly minimalistic arrangement with Nancy's sublimely haunting vocal dramatically offset with atmospheric flourishes of reverb-soaked guitar. Seized upon by Quentin Tarantino as the tailor-made opening title for *Kill Bill Volume 1* Nancy never sounded more chillingly understated than she does here. Pop has seldom cut deeper.

Available on: How Does That Grab You? (LIGHT IN THE ATTIC LP)



AUTOGRAPHS
While I'm Still Young

London outfit Autographs formed in 1978 with ex-Stukas Chris Gent out front, and Mickie Most's RAK label issuing their only single. 'While I'm Still Young' remains a great piece of energetic new-wave/powerpop. Alas, like many from that era, blink and you'd have missed them. The good news is that Detour's keen ears must've pricked up when they heard the group had recorded a whole LP's worth of similarly lively fayre – including original acetate demo of this fabulous mover. Smartly, it's recently been released for newer generations to enjoy.

Available on: Autographs (DETOUR LP)

RAMSEY LEWIS
Cry Baby Cry

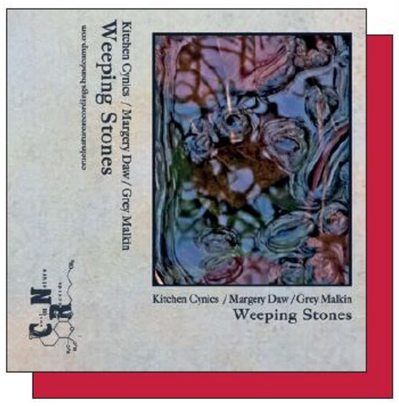
Jazz pianist Ramsey Lewis recorded over 80 albums in a career that began before the birth of rock 'n' roll and continued well into the internet age. This cut from his 1968 album of *White Album* covers has been earning repeat plays recently. While few people would choose The Beatles' version as their favourite Lennon/McCartney composition, Lewis makes it his own, with funky drums, stirring orchestration, drop-outs and an eerie electronic intro. Interestingly, Lewis used a Moog synthesiser for this track and others on the album, predating The Beatles use of the instrument on *Abbey Road*.

Available on: Mother Nature's Son (CADET LP)

DOLL BY DOLL
Main Travelled Roads

The "huge psycho-rock experiment" of their first two albums having failed to find an audience, Doll By Doll adopted a more commercial approach for their eponymous third. The stand-out was the haunting, sweeping 'Main Travelled Roads', which frontman Jackie Leven claimed was based on 17th century ballad 'The Bonnie Earl O' Moray' (in truth, it chimed closer to 'The Riddle Song' from two centuries earlier). This should've set the band on the road to stardom, but instead they split up, the Celtic poeticism of 'Main Travelled Roads' providing the template for Leven's solo career.

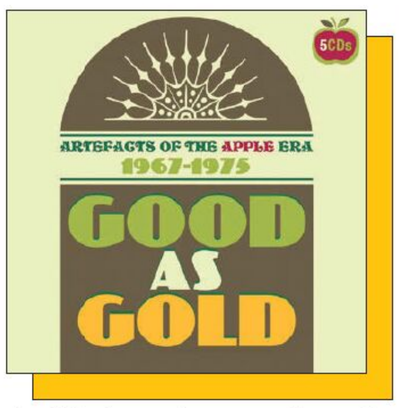
Available on: Doll By Doll (RHINO CD)



KITCHEN CYNICS / MARGERY DAW / GREY MALKIN
Red

This gorgeously evocative incantation marks the culmination of the trio's *Weeping Stones* album, a collection of sounds and word poetry that reflects the most ancient of days; each as enchanting as they are inspiring. Many weird and wonderful instruments and voices are heard cascading down and around, yet the precise lyrical content of 'Red' — mostly single words or economical phrases — and the fittingly layered sound movements woven throughout the piece makes it perhaps the most meditative of these magical sound offerings.

Available on: Weeping Stones (CRUEL NATURE CASSETTE)



PAGLIARIO
Lovin' You Ain't Easy

The Foreign Correspondents' recent Pagliaro covers 45 sent us scurrying back to the source. A masterclass in proto-powerpop songwriting, performance and dynamics, 'Lovin' You Ain't Easy' saw the French-Canadian artist (PAG to his fans) finesse his talent for commercial, Beatles-indebted rock, resulting in a Canadian RPM chart Top 20 hit that's helped sustain his career to this day. It even crawled to a respectable #31 in the UK when released on Pye in January 1972. Partly recorded at Apple Studio (where some of that magic clearly rubbed off), it almost justifies its inclusion on a number of UK anthologies.

Available on: Good As Gold (Artefacts Of The Apple Era 1967-1975) (GRAPEFRUIT 5-CD)

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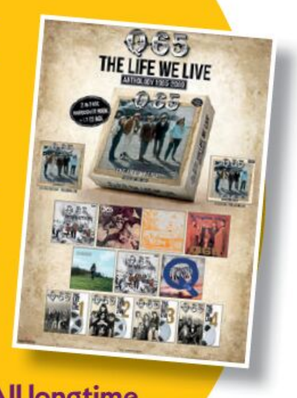

On the back of our epic two-part **Q65** history by Mike Stax we have the gargantuan ***The Life We Live: Anthology 1965-2000*** deluxe box set to give away to one very lucky subscriber. Featuring 11CDs and a 216-page hardcover book, written by Mike, this is undoubtedly the final word on these behemoths of Nederbeat and bluesy heavy-rock. If you are yet to do so, subscribe today to be in with a chance of winning. All longtime and recent subscribers are automatically entered too. Don't miss out.

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After last year's expanded reissue of the sole album by Jon 'Mojo' Mills' **THE NUTHINS** comes vinyl rarities collection ***Oddities ... All Sorts ... Magic Mixtures – Rare And Unreleased 1993-1998.*** **Order here: https://bit.ly/3wu5H2I**

Andy Morten's band **BRONCO BULLFROG** has its back catalogue reissued on vinyl by Guerssen. Head here to order: **guerssen.com/artist/bronco-bullfrog/**

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it's a **happening** thing

Beachwood Sparks 2024. L-R: Jen Gunst, Ben Knight, Brent Rademaker, Chris Gunst, Farmer Dave

Gentle Samurais

The story of LA alt-country renegades **BEACHWOOD SPARKS** has been told in detail in these pages over the last two decades. The recording process of new album A*cross The River Of Stars* was detailed late last year, but we couldn't see it released without further coverage. It's an important entry in the canon of Cosmic Californian Music.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS joins **BRENT RADEMAKER** for reflections on now and then

Shindig!: Leading up to the 20th anniversary of your debut, Curation released some archival material. 'Morning Light' is an absolute gem. What's the story behind this? And indeed, the material that makes up *Beachwood Deluxe*? It's wonderful.

Brent Rademaker: Thank you! that was such a magical time in our history, we had songs coming in from four different sources. We enjoyed a really nice sized audience in Los Angeles and San Francisco, it felt like a real happening of sorts with lots of friends and other bands exploring the past in music and style and looking for ways to make it current. We also had the attention and support of some record labels and publishers who were sticking us in the recording studios around town, everyone from Rick Rubin to Twink was coming round to hear what we were doing. 'Morning Light' was the product of one of those sessions with Lilys producer Mike Deming.

S!: It's been 12 years since *The Tarnished Gold*. What led to you reconvening and recording a new record? You told me in our 20 Questions interview that you had no plan of doing anything again. Was the reissue of the debut the straw that broke the camel's back? You even mirrored The Band's *Last Waltz* sleeve.

BR: The reissue helped me and my Curation partners get a sense of if there was an audience for the music and is it worth it? The actual reconvening of the band was very organic and nurtured by Britt from Spiritual Pajamas who had proposed a recording session at Wally Heiders' place, but the pandemic blew those plans up in smoke. Internally the communication between Chris Gunst, Farmer Dave and myself continued until the idea of doing a new record actually came together.

Yes, *The Tarnished Gold* did resemble *The Last Waltz*, that cover was created in-house by the wonderful art dept of Sub Pop Records, it was the last one of our contract with them, so I guess there was some symbolism going on there... We sure gathered lots of the old crew and new friends for that record.

S!: You've lost two members, three if you consider Neal. Do you find the ghosts of these players enter the writing and recording process and sessions. How did they all shape what became the BS sound?

BR: I really love how we don't try to replace or replicate the sounds and styles of the players who are no longer with us, we just do something different or nothing at all... that "nothing" or space says a lot more in the end. We feel their absence and it's easy to recognise sections where they would fit, and although

we do miss them it's more important for us to be in the moment and create with the people who are there. I think EVERYONE who's ever been a member of the band helped shape the sound of the records they are on. The constant threads running through, like Chris's voice or the Farmer Dave factor (you know what I mean), along with the songs that the three of us have written are what shaped the Beachwood Sparks sound, to me.

***S!*:** Across *The River Of Stars* is your fourth album proper. Where does it sit in your canon?
BR: To me, *Across The River Of Stars* sits as not only among our best ever, but the experience recording it was both familiar and brand new, and that makes it great for us. We're super proud of the album.

***S!*:** *The Tarnished Gold* was a very different record. The indie/alt elements that appeared after the debut, are gone. It was a very purist country-rock album that could have been huge in 1971. Where were you at in 2012?
BR: That record was so special to me because it brought me back to California after some years living in Florida. I needed that and I am really happy with what I have done in my second time around in LA... It really was the experience and release of that record that moved me. The sound changed a lot because we changed, and our surroundings changed. We were no longer all living together and rocking the canyons and going out to clubs, we grew up a little bit.

***S!*:** You and Chris Robinson have become, in certain eyes (mine actually) the elder statesmen of LA, nurturing and appreciating the city's finest acts. Beachwood Sparks and Chris Robinson go back a long way. Tell me about when you first met and the music you bonded over?
BR: I was a bit scared of Chris when we met, he always got me so stoned, and I was burnt on pot at the time so I always kinda gelled around him. He was SO COOL and supportive, but he was a rock star to me (one of the last). It wasn't until The Chris Robinson Brotherhood days that we truly became close and realised we both loved The Church and the Bunnymen (not just crazy obscure country-freak-rock), Aerosmith and The Cure, he really likes *Faith*. Like yourself, and your readers, he is a total rock 'n' roll freak and a huge FAN. He also likes to step up and help other bands get gigs and make records. Nurturing and appreciating... we do have that in common.

***S!*:** What was it like touring with The Black Crowes?
BR: Totally rad, and a 10/10 on the experience scale, but a bit odd for Beachwood Sparks, as you would expect. We were the little weird opening band without the firepower to win over an audience by rocking out arena style, we had something different.

"The reissue helped me and my Curation partners get a sense of if there was an audience for the music and is it worth it? The actual reconvening of the band was very organic"

It was a long tour...I personally really loved playing every night together to see where we could take it. I loved hanging with my friends on the highways and backstages of America, we went everywhere. It did reveal that some people weren't as into it as others and although the conditions were rough, they weren't half as bad as some of the stories I hear from much bigger bands in books and podcasts... plus we signed up for it. Times were very different in Fargo, North Dakota: someone yelled "WEEZER" in between our songs... it was cool that they had never seen or heard anything like us before. I loved that! Some of the friends and fellow followers of Curation Records were at those shows. Chris helped give us our career.

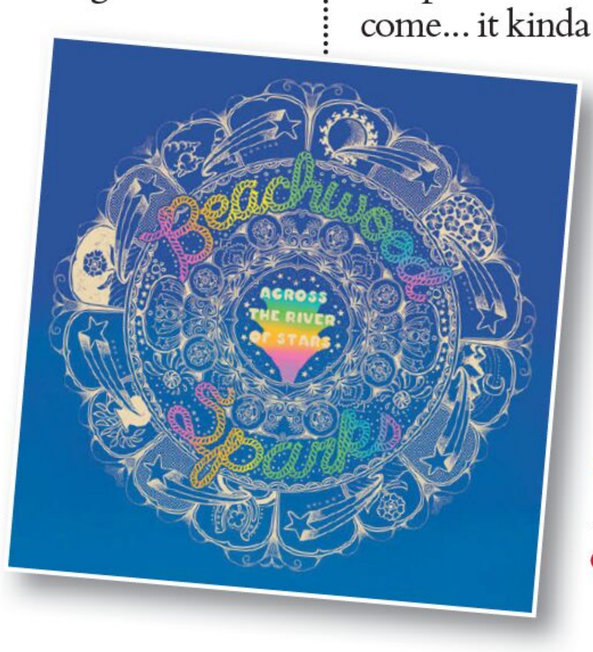
Watching Uni Boys and Billy Tibbals open the tour with the Crowes in modern times is so rewarding and pure fucking fun. I can go to those big concerts and pretend we are in the movie *Foxes* with Jodi Foster and Cherie Currie, and we are all going out to see Angel and Heavy Waters at The Forum. California is still pretty rad – don't let the internet fool ya!

***S!*:** What has Chris brought to *Across The River Of Stars*?
BR: The record doesn't exist without Chris. It would just be some parts and riffs on a voice memo on an iPhone. There were times in the studio that we would be listening to a cool part on playback or celebrating getting a good take and Chris would say, "You just got produced" and he was right. Chris has his own method and style of producing, and like many things in life if you flow with it, things are gonna be rad and exciting.

***S!*:** You recorded at Jon Dwyer's Discount Mirror Studios. That was something new, right? Did the space bring out a different energy?
BR: Yes indeed. Another thing that Chris brought to the record was by introducing John and Eric to me and showing me their new recording studio about two miles from my house in my neighbourhood. We told the band about it, and they agreed to gather there. The studio and their vibe isn't that traditional wooden slatted / Topanga Canyon meets Westworld with Mod Podge driftwood, surf, corral imagery like you'd expect. It's more ('90s) indie, more garagey, so I turned my bass amp all the way up and used a Wooly Mammoth bass fuzz pedal. We played the songs once or twice once we had the arrangement together and then we sang the vocals, usually in one take while laughing. As a songwriter and singer, Chris Robinson was super helpful with lyrics and phrasing. We kept it simple and honest.

***S!*:** 'Torn In Two' is a wonderful dose of LA slacker-pop, perhaps more in line with your early Sub Pop releases than anything on *The Tarnished Gold*. After GospelbeacH, now finished, how do you separate Sparks and Beach songs?
BR: 'Torn In Two' could be the ultimate Beachwood Sparks song, I don't think we were in a very folky mood on this album. We were ready to be turned loose and for us that can be a little "slack" because Beachwood Sparks has always held our excitement back, we don't "rock out" and our style of "jamming" is more like noise-rock and not like the Dead. I only wrote like a song and a half on the new Beachwood album, I wrote all the songs in GospelbeacH and that band was an experiment in many of the things I don't do in Beachwood... it (GospelbeacH) was super fun but it was a totally different thing, only one song meant for BwS ever get recorded by GbcH.

***S!*:** What has inspired the songs, musically and otherwise?
BR: As a listener/bystander I can see that Chris's songs have been inspired by his life and I think the band itself has inspired some lyrics. Lost friends seems to be an undeniable theme in 'Gentle Samurai'. Farmer Dave held a 2AM vocal ceremony one night after we all went home. Dave used his current station to amazing effect: synths, melodica, 12-string and lap steel all in his quiver. We all have our own way of delivering it. I hope that it's a pleasant record to reflect on in years to come... it kinda already is.



***S!*:** Have you got to a point in life that when it comes to the Sparks it's a case of never say never? You clearly work well together.
BR: Chris and Dave are younger than me, so we've got time!

Across The River Of Stars is out on Curation on 19th July

it's a **happening** thing

Elysian Fields

"Do we detect an exotica/lounge revival in the air?" we asked back in September 2023. The answer was a resounding "Yes!"

Leading the charge are Gothenburg quintet **ÌXTAHUELE**, whose fourth album promises "music for noble savages and urban primitives".

Bandleader Mattias Uneback guides us through 10 long-playing cornerstones from the heyday of exotica

Sneaky Tiki. Ìxtahuele with Mattias (middle)

GENE RAINS AND HIS GROUP

Lotus Land

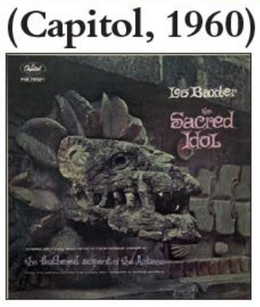
(Decca, 1960)

Rains' interpretation and recording of the impressionistic piece 'Lotus Land' by Cyril Scott has been an inspiration for years. The open soundscape, soothing percussion effects in the form of cymbal swells and waterfalls along with haunting bird calls and whole-tone scales have had a big impact on this album, not least on the song 'Moonflower'.

LES BAXTER

The Sacred Idol

(Capitol, 1960)



'Pyramid Of The Sun' is a playful, cool and cinematic tune with an exciting instrumentation by this top-notch composer. So many of Baxter's pieces and works have been a huge inspiration since even before the birth of Ìxtahuele. What makes it so interesting, perhaps, is the wide array of genres he's worked with. He's the best!

THE GEORGE SHEARING QUINTET

Latin Affair

(Capitol, 1959)

Mr Shearing's characteristic way of putting together block chords on the piano with the vibraphone dubbed on top is a winning concept that works so well, whether it's in mambo, jazz or exotica music. The melody lines and arrangements on 'Afro #4' evoke so much cinematic escapism.

DON RALKE ORCHESTRA

The Savage And The Sensuous Bongos

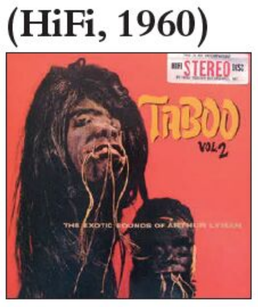
(Warner Bros, 1960)

The simple chord structures and monotonous, hypnotising rhythms make 'Black Panther' an absolute favourite of ours. It's a very mystic and adventurous number on the *Bongos* album, along with other excellent tracks as 'Face Beside The Fire', which both creates so many inner visuals.

ARTHUR LYMAN

Taboo Vol 2

(HiFi, 1960)



'Return To Paradise' has ambient echoing drums and cymbals played with a simple approach in a naked sound picture with incoming dramatic and dynamic passages, which gives an incredible depth. This has been influential to many of the compositions on *Pathways To Paradise*. Songs like 'Komodo And The Mistress' and 'The Foreigner' share some similar elements. Tension and release.

FRANK HUNTER AND HIS ORCHESTRA

White Goddess

(Kapp, 1959)

'Temple Bells' is a beautiful and harmonic minor tune of the genre, in contrast to other, more mysterious exotica tunes. Not spectacular – just perfect.

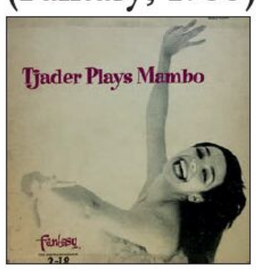
"The open soundscape, soothing percussion effects in the form of cymbal swells and waterfalls along with haunting bird calls and whole-tone scales have had a big impact on this album"

The clearness of the arrangement is desirable, and so are the delicate changes backing up the simple melody and the melodic sequences.

CAL TJADER QUINTET

Tjader Plays Mambo

(Fantasy, 1955)



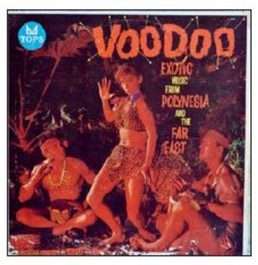
Mr Tjader's way of phrasing any melody line and making ornaments to arrangements like on 'East Of The Sun' is definitely something you can never get enough off. The cool and relaxed approach and confidence in every note played is world class. It's hard to pick a single tune by this artist. The way he presents a melody from A to B has been influential on our songs, such as 'The Hookah Parlor'.

ROBERT DRASNIN

Voodoo Exotic Music From Polynesia And The Far East

(Tops, 1959)

There are so many layers, moods and

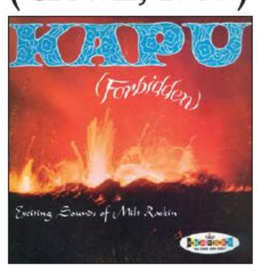


rhythmic structures here. The diversity, playfulness, instrumentation and even melodic motifs have had a big impact on our band more than once. This whole album has been a constant source of inspiration.

MILT RASKIN

Kapu (Forbidden)

(Crown, 1959)



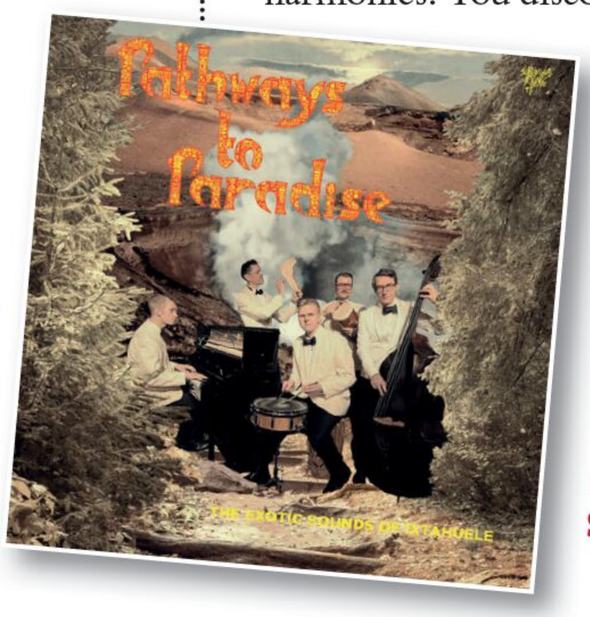
A delightful and dynamic album with its own peculiar way of presenting themes and rhythms. A groovy masterpiece of the genre without being too explosive. Sweet ornamentation and delicate improvisation. Remarkable breaks and solos with odd instruments like the boobams on 'Koko Head' from the same album.

MARTIN DENNY

Exotica Volume II

(Capitol, 1957)

'When First I Love' is a song that's been close and special to the band for years. It, among others, was a big inspiration for us to start playing and composing exotica music. It has so many of the delicate elements: characteristic bass lines, pseudo-oriental scales, simplistic percussion arrangements and interesting harmonies. You discover new details every time you put the needle in the groove, and it's a true reminder of why we fell in love with this kind of music.



Pathways To Paradise is out now on Subliminal Sounds

Marina Allen, a stellar talent
PHOTO: JULIANA GIRAFFE +NICOLA GIRAFFE

Coming Up To Shore

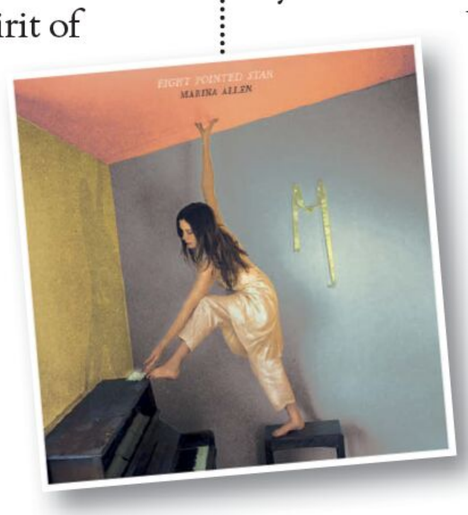
MARINA ALLEN goes to the bottom of the ocean with **CAMILLA AISA**

From its very title *Eight Pointed Star*, Marina Allen's third LP, places emphasis on looking in various directions at once. "After the more straightforward *Centrifics,* I felt liberated to explore a different way, play with the concept of a singer-songwriter," she reflects. "So much music is post-genre anyway that it feels natural, not even radical, to do that. Everything has already been said and done, it feels, so it's cool taking all these different parts to complete a whole new thing, similar to making a quilt. The scraps of songs, if you sew them all together, they create a whole new tapestry." It's not hard to see how well the collage-y spirit of the record reflects that of our time. "Everything is all jumbled up together already," Allen considers. "You would have to go so out of your way to not engage with the many things you're given to look at and reflect on. You can get nihilistic about that, but there's also something to embrace. Denying it is not helpful, it feels nostalgic. I'm not necessarily making experimental new music but playing with the sense that everything's up for grabs. It would be so sad to leave things out because you felt like they didn't fit with who you think you are".

"It's cool taking all these different parts to complete a whole new thing, similar to making a quilt"

Eight Pointed Star's lyrics reveal the same open-minded, explorative spirit. There's a striking balance of the abstract and the solid in Allen's writing. Songs are transcending without resorting to feeble escapism, elements of daily life are considered for their epiphanic potential. "The artists that I look up to are very skilled at taking account of all the ways in which we experience humanity," she points out. "All the crazy insane stuff that's happening is equally important as finding ways to have peace in the world, or to feel light and buoyant. Being in dialogue with both means confronting a lot of pain. You have to go down to the bottom of the ocean – it's mysterious, scary and terrifying, but then you can come up to shore and have all of these little shells you found to show people."

One of the new songs, 'Easy', plays like an ode to the power of small things. Allen describes it as her first real love song. Reckoning with the simple can be surprisingly hard. "*Eight Pointed Star* talks a lot about love, misconceptions of love and how I thought that love was supposed to be complicated and hard. That is certainly one version of love – and I think it valuable – but the peace that healthy love can bring is, while maybe a little bit boring, much deeper. There's a lot of wisdom in that. 'Easy' is a song about realising that love is supposed to be exactly that, easy – a quality that doesn't make it not interesting or worthy of intrigue." It's an almost startling realisation; songwriter lore has taught us quite the opposite. "In art and especially in music we perpetuate that you have to be in pain to write powerful things," Allen says. "I don't necessarily think that's true. With pain comes a lot of wisdom, but hopefully we won't abuse that so much as to manipulate the audience to stay in an immature place of pain."



Eight Pointed Star is out on 7th June on Fire

Ghosts At The Door

Torchbearers of Los Angeles psych **DREAM PHASES** return with a not so difficult third album. **DUNCAN FLETCHER** leans into its deep songs and eclectic grooves

"It's sort of a play on hero or celebrity worship, meaning the idol doesn't really exist. That the idealisation of something might not really be what you think it is. It sounds a little surfy and dark too, which we thought was cool," says main songwriter/multi-instrumentalist Brandon Graham, explaining the title of Dream Phases' latest album. *Phantom Idol* is simultaneously more rocking and more acoustically layered than its predecessor *New Distractions*. The band which includes Brandon's brother Shane (drums), and Keveen Baudouin (keys/guitar), recorded all the basic tracks live.

"This was one of the easiest records for us to make and we were very focused," says Shane. "It was our first time working with producers Rob Schnapf and Matt Schuessler, which was a pleasure. We cherished every moment recording with them and using one piece of amazing gear after another. We also collaborated a lot more on this record which was refreshing and opened the door for new creative possibilities."

The group's sound has a focus on strong songwriting backed with Laurel Canyon folk textures, soulful rhythms and a layer of noise inspired by the band's more leftfield influences. "We had talked about wanting to incorporate some of our krautrock, post-punk, and shoegaze influences into this record. I think with more open collaboration and everyone bringing songs to the table, it paved the way for a nice eclectic but cohesive album" says Shane.

Shindig! asks if there was a key song that unlocked the album's feel and themes? "'Turn Away' unlocked it," says Brandon. "That was the first song that we've created from scratch with the three of us in a room. The theme being information overload and burnout. It was possibly a response to another theme on the record which is on 'Living In A Cave' – coming out of living essentially solitary existences during the pandemic and readjusting."

Another standout track is 'Not Laughing Anymore', which Brandon describes as the album's "most '60s sounding tune, probably influenced by Nilsson and Donovan". "It's about maturing and moving on from outdated ideas," he adds. "I'm not a PC crusader but it's important to acknowledge when people do or say things that aren't cool, even if they were once accepted. We have to grow, become more self-aware and empathetic. It was partly inspired by Me Too stories, and also from hearing about musicians in our scene getting called out for poor and predatory behaviour. It's like, come on 'wake up'. Also, kind of surmising those people are probably miserable themselves. You can find these sentiments elsewhere on the album too."

Phantom Idol is out 12th July on Coconut

"We had talked about wanting to incorporate some of our krautrock, post-punk, and shoegaze influences into this record. I think with more open collaboration and everyone bringing songs to the table, it paved the way for a nice eclectic but cohesive album"

Not just a phase they're going through

it's a **happening** thing

Intellectual Exercise

Fried recordings invoking the sounds of a Notting Hill squat made by young men on a Revox. **NTP**'s Robert Hickson tells **AUSTIN MATTHEWS** the story

The band was formed by Robert and Jeremy Blackford while at school in Beaconsfield, choosing the name NTP (Normal Temperature And Pressure) in a physics lesson. "It was Jeremy who had the idea of forming a group in our teens," recalls Robert, "even though I could barely play the guitar!"

The band made their first recordings in 1967, with a three-track acetate, followed by a 10" in '69 and a full album in '70 (both untitled). Intended as a completely private record of their work. "Having it pressed made it all feel real in some way," he says. In fact, all NTP albums would be pressed in minute quantities.

Whilst attending Slough College, Robert met Al Spokes, a drummer who would later join NTP and contribute to their next album *Towards Autumn* in '71. Al also asked Robert to join the improbably named Ultra Smooth Swagger Band (USSB) in '70, who played a mix of West Coast inspired psych and hard-rock. This entity recorded a demo in '72 which will be released on Bright Carvings later in 2024.

Simultaneously working on NTP, Robert and Al recorded *Upstaged* in '72. The music had now progressed considerably with an incredible mix of weird outsider psychedelia, blues workouts and plaintive ballads. "Our recordings are the story of our tape recorders," admits Robert. "The first album's on a really naff one, then Jeremy and I put one together from a kit. Then I bought my first Revox and things began to change for the better. Otherwise, the circumstances were simply, make an album, get better, make another..."

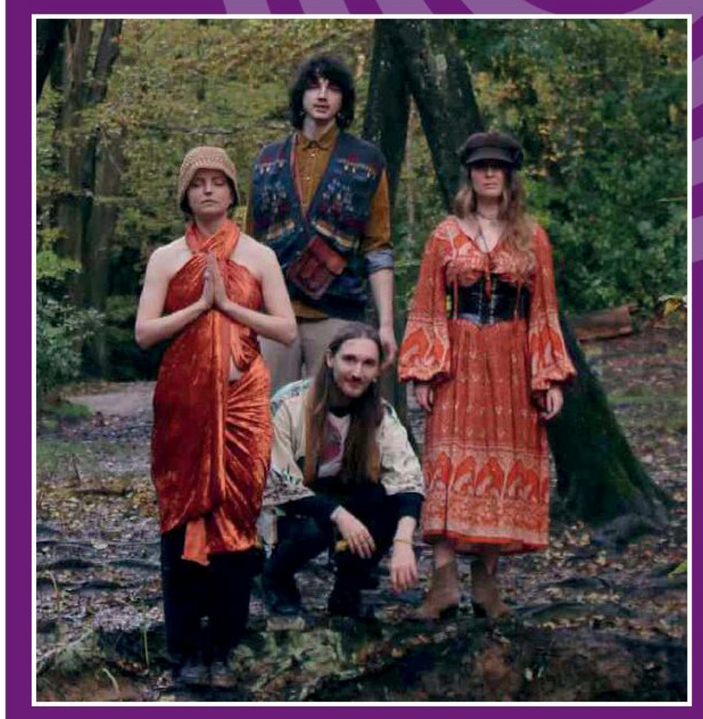
Sadly, tragedy curtailed the USSB when Al Spokes died in a car accident, just as they had secured a deal for a one-off single. NTP continued with a new member, Mick Ford, who notably went on to act in the movie *Scum*. A further album *Bedrock* was recorded in '73 that only survives on reel-to-reel tape.

Though there were no further NTP albums, Robert has always continued making music for theatre and film, and he and Mick Ford still record music together as Closer Apart. Asked about renewed interest in NTP, Robert concludes, "I'm gobsmacked! Jeremy died in 2015, and I'm only sorry that he and Al aren't with me to drink to this...."

Upstaged is out now on Bright Carvings

"Our recordings are the story of our tape recorders." Robert in 1971

happening right now



Hope Springs Eternal

The spiritual and the psychedelic fuse in the transcendent folk of **TAMESIS**

"Musically, I wanted to combine the quiet-loud dynamics of Pixies and '90s grunge bands I listened to a lot growing up, with an almost medieval folk element, with some heavy phaser distortion thrown in to channel a sort-of late-stage capitalist nervous breakdown!" Tamesis guitarist Joe Jones clearly has grander designs than composing pop ditties that rhyme "moon" with "June".

Magna Mater, the new EP from the "mystical folk-rock coven", is a musically and lyrically ambitious release that deftly interweaves witchy, acoustic psychedelia with harder rock. 'Magic', the song Jones describes, concerns "a soul trapped in the wheel of Samara", while the title track is a paean to sacred and ecological rebirth. According to singer and acoustic guitarist Maisie Ashford, "Overall the EP explores themes like alienation and cognitive dissonance of living within a capitalist industrialised society, while witnessing the destruction of the planet, and our intrinsic urge to seek deeper meaning and spiritual connection."

Founded in 2019, Tamesis take their name from the Celtic Goddess of Spring Water, who begat her title to the River Thames. "The river and water theme also ties in with our interest in astrology," enthuses Jones, "water being the element of emotion and the subconscious, which is what we hope to play with in our music."

Along with Jones and Ashford the band consists of bassist Gerda Lucy Rankka and drummer Jacob Price. Having performed regularly around London and the south-east, the quartet aspire to take their music further afield and, as Ashford asserts, "connect with artists and audiences who are exploring alternative ways of living". They are also keen to return to the recording studio, possibly in collaboration with other musicians, "on longer, more improvisational psychedelic songs". Alternatively, as Jones possibly only partly jests, "There's also a chance that in three years we will all have become full-time monks."

As told to Clive Webb

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EIGHT POINTED STAR
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RYAN DAVIS AND THE ROADHOUSE BAND
DANCING ON THE EDGE
TOUGH LOVE LP / CD

A masterpiece of its kind, assembling labyrinthian song cycle, poetic languor & a sense of America's End in ways that feel both part of a tradition & a re-invention of it. RIYL Silver Jews, Lambchop, Sparklehorse, Bill Callahan++

SHELLAC
TO ALL TRAINS
TOUCH AND GO RECORDS LP / CD

THE BAND. It's still: Steve Albini ◊ Guitar. Todd Trainer ◊ Drums. Bob Weston ◊ Bass. DATA. This is Shellac's sixth studio LP.

COWTOWN
FEAR OF...
GRINGO RECORDS LP

First album in 8 years from Leeds Devo-esque DIY punk trio, full of three minute pop blasts. Have previously toured with Deerhoof and Quasi.

KEE AVIL
SPINE
CONSTELLATION 180G LP / CD

The follow-up to their acclaimed 2022 debut pushes deeper into spartan and superbly carved post-punk guitar + electronic songcraft. 180gram vinyl art edition includes set of six 12x12 insert prints.

HOW TO DRESS WELL
I AM TOWARD YOU
SARGENT HOUSE LP / CD

LA-based musician Tom Krell returns with I Am Toward You, the first new album in 6 years. With some of his noisiest, most free, & poetic music to date, Krell opens the 2nd decade of his career with an album that delivers on the hallmarks of his best work.

LIONLIMB
LIMBO
BAYONET RECORDS LP

'Limbo' is another masterful expression of Lionlimb's lush, psychedelic, chamber-pop. The album is incredibly easy to be engulfed by, brimming with lavish instrumentation, slide guitars, shimmering piano, synths, tape loops and strings.

FINOM
NOT GOD
JOYFUL NOISE RECORDINGS LP / CD

Not God is the new album from Chicago's beloved two-headed monster, Finom (fka Ohmme). Produced by Jeff Tweedy in the Wilco Loft, Not God is a marvel of growth.

JIMI TENOR & COLD DIAMOND & MINK
IS THERE LOVE IN OUTER SPACE?
TIMMION RECORDS LP / CD

Full of cosmic soul ballads & funky psychedelia. Throughout the album Jimi's seasoned artistry shines through, showcasing his ability to blend celestial sounds with gritty moondust funk.

STRAND OF OAKS
MIRACLE FOCUS
WESTERN VINYL LP / CD

Strand of Oaks embraces electronics on Miracle Focus with a sound that Pitchfork says "...melds the synth and guitar tones of the Cure with the upcountry jangle of Tom Petty."

GOOD LOOKS
LIVED HERE FOR A WHILE
KEELED SCALES LP / CD

The follow-up to Good Looks' critically acclaimed 2022 debut Bummer Year, Lived Here For A While builds out their Americana sound with clanging post-punk guitars and expansive indie rock.

BLOOMSDAY
HEART OF THE ARTICHOKE
BAYONET RECORDS LP / CD

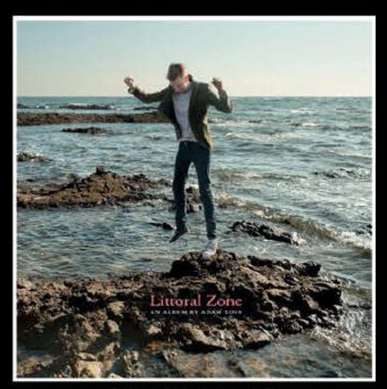
Bloomsday writes spacious, full-bodied folk songs that feel like somewhere between a mirror and a memory. 'Heart of the Artichoke' is a relic of unfettered creativity and community, and is an ode to all things that are good, no matter how small.

TYMON DOGG & THE DACOITS
THE GRANADA SESSIONS
TINY GLOBAL PRODUCTIONS LP / CD

Backed by Richard Dudanski (PiL, Raincoats, 101'ers) and three members from Spanish legends Lagartija Nick, The Granada Sessions is odd rock brilliance in the style Tymon's former band, The Mescaleros.

MUI ZYU
NOTHING OR SOMETHING TO DIE FOR
FATHER/DAUGHTER RECORDS LP / CD

Like the psychedelic tones of Ryuichi Sakamoto or the eerie wanderings of Angelo Badalamenti, the sophomore album from mui zyu expertly toes the line between disorder and clarity.



ADAM ROSS
LITTORAL ZONE
FIKA RECORDINGS LP / CD

A heavily lyrical collection of warped 70s-esque indie-folk ballads from Randolph's Leap frontman, surrounded by Scottish Album Of The Year Award nominated composer & multi-instrumentalist Andrew Wasylyk's deft production.

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it's a **happening** thing

Shore Thing

As **STEPHEN'S SHORE** bring California to Stockholm on their new EP, **HUW THOMAS** talks 12-strings and skateboarding with vocalist and guitarist Viktor Sjödin

Jangle-pop is alive and well and living in Sweden. Since 2016, Stockholm five-piece Stephen's Shore have been crafting a series of woozy records that nest snugly between The Byrds and The Field Mice. Over four EPs and an album, 2018's excellent *September Love*, they've stayed on mission. "It's always been about the jangle," says vocalist-guitarist Viktor Sjödin. "From the beginning, we just wanted to make songs that shimmer. At one time we had three 12-string guitars at once!"

Neptune, the band's latest EP, was recorded live on a hot summer's day with Melody's Echo Chamber and Dungen collaborator Fredrik Swahn behind the desk. Though the band "don't like when it's too perfect", these four songs refract like shiny, but burnished gemstones. Lead track 'Under the Pine' boasts a lazy brilliance that betrays the band's hankering for the west coast. Their party trick is turning simple, direct songs into caverns of longing. It's some sort of alchemy to turn out 'Garden' (a track that sounds like 'Eight Miles High' got a job as a lifeguard) live in the studio. "It's mostly about having a good time," says Viktor. "We just want to keep it simple and want the recording to sound as we do when we play live or rehearse. That's the essence."

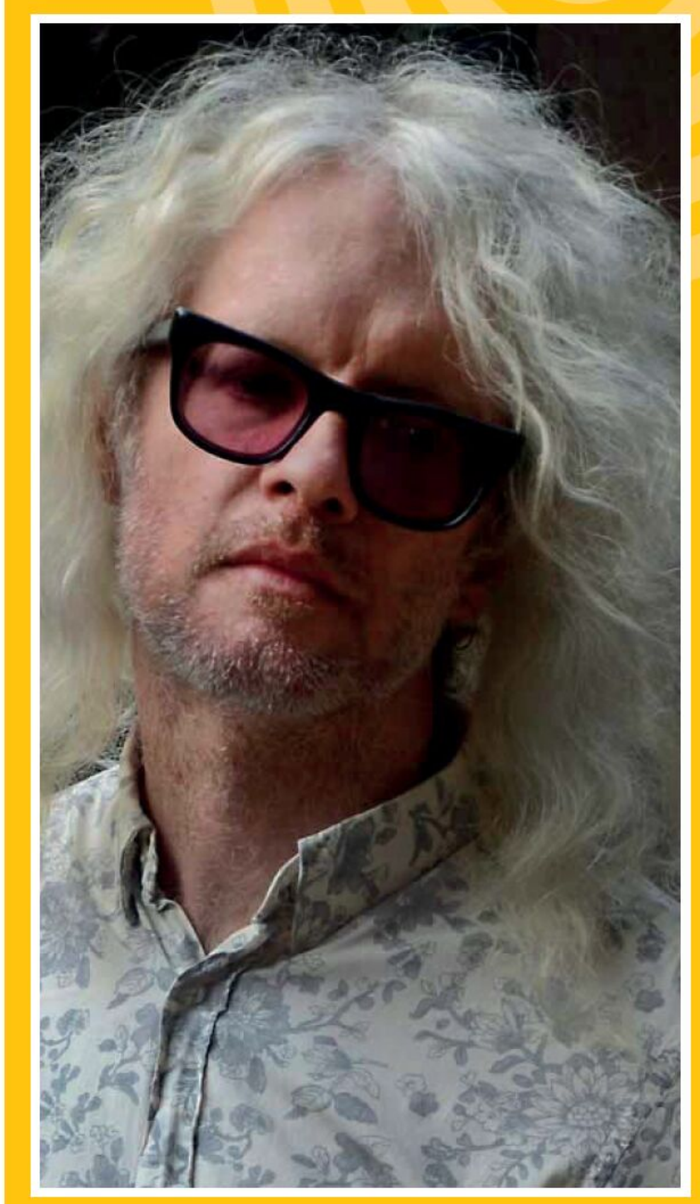
Unity is key to Stephen's Shore. Viktor says it "goes very fast once we all play it together", and the band's synergy runs deeper thanks to their next favourite hobby. "We all come from skateboarding, that's how we all know each other – it's our common ground," explains Viktor. "Growing up skating in the early '90s, you got so much great music from old skate movies and magazines. I don't know if it influences the songs but it's nice to have that other thing that connects us." Viktor suggests that "the surf roots in skateboarding" inform the band's sound.

Photography connects the band, too. Two members are working photographers, and the band's name was chosen in tribute to the legendary New York snapper Stephen Shore. "When we started writing songs, we had an idea that we should make music that has the same vibe as his pictures. Colourful and nostalgic," says Viktor. It makes perfect sense. Stephen's Shore make music you can see.

Neptune is out now on Meretorio

Stephen's Shore. Out of this world

hear & now



Odd-pop institution **ANTON BARBEAU** shares his current fave raves

LISTENING (OLD)

Maybe like a lot of Gen X-ers, I'm digging into all sorts of music I missed first time around. I always liked Steely Dan for their radio hits, but I've very recently become an insufferable fanatic. Steve Albini's bitchings about the band are funny, but did he write 'Peg'? Otherwise, the jukebox is filled with Parliament/Funkadelic, Walter Wegmüller's Tarot and various Popol Vuh this week. Internet radio station psychedelicized.com has turned me onto '60s artists like Jan & Lorraine, Colours and Linda Perhacs.

LISTENING (NEW)

I saw Hainbach do a gig at Patch Point, Berlin in 2022, and have been picking up his releases since. He's truly tuned to the moment, musically, in a way I envy and admire. Rosie Abbott's last album *Magnified* was released in 2020, but I take every chance I get to give her props.

READING

I'm just starting *The Golden Apple*, book two of The Illuminatus Trilogy. I love how Robert Anton Wilson can ravel, unravel, re-ravel the stuff and junk of the universe, but always with a grounded, smirky wink. Looking forward to Robyn Hitchcock's memoir.

WATCHING

Babylon Berlin, Frasier (OG), Life Of Brian, Bundesliga, various Steely Dan, modular synth and DMT videos on YouTube.

As told to Andy Morten

An Introduction To Anton Barbeau is out now on Fruits de Mer

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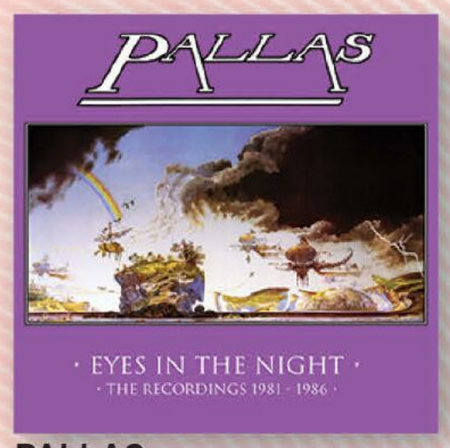

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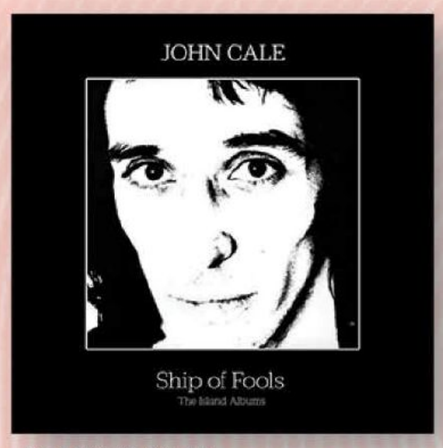

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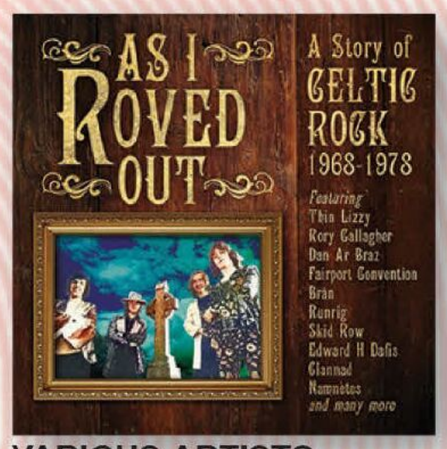

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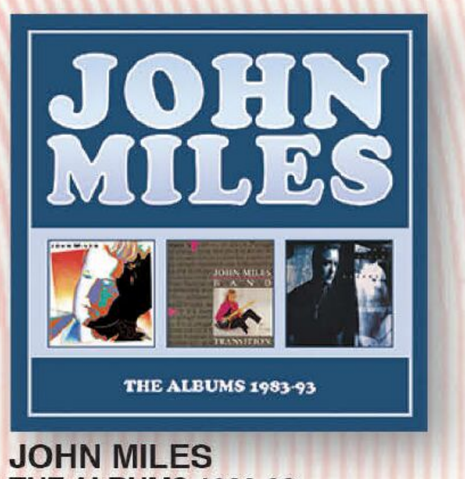

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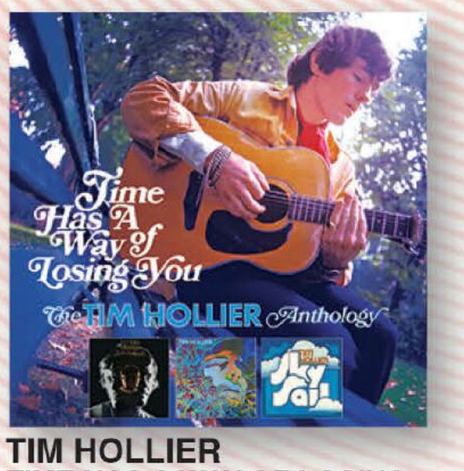

TIM HOLLIER
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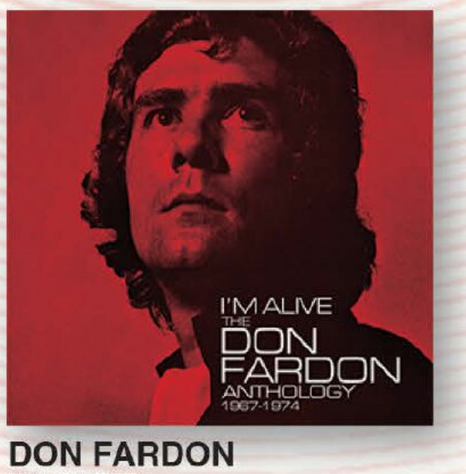

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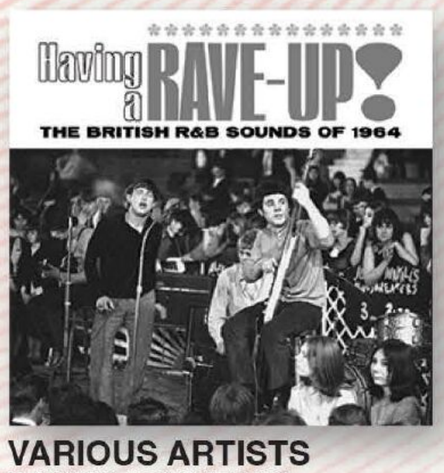

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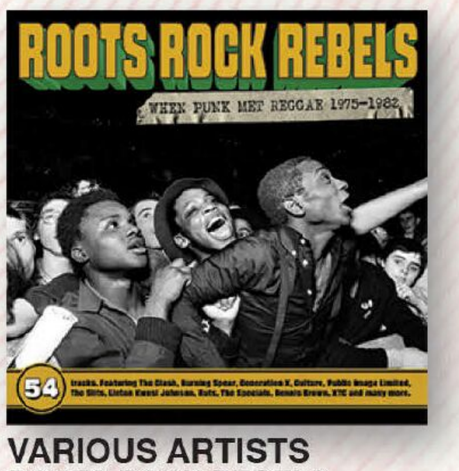

VARIOUS ARTISTS
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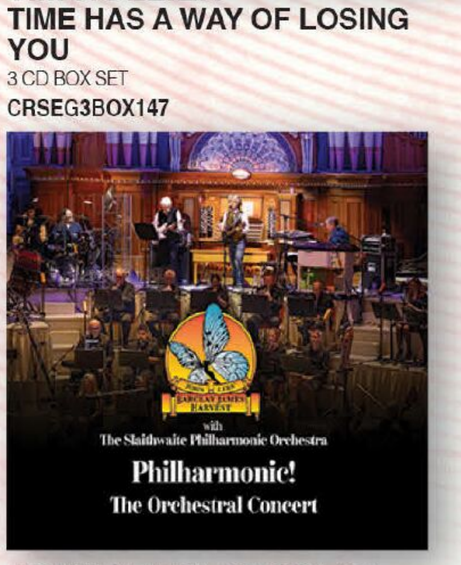

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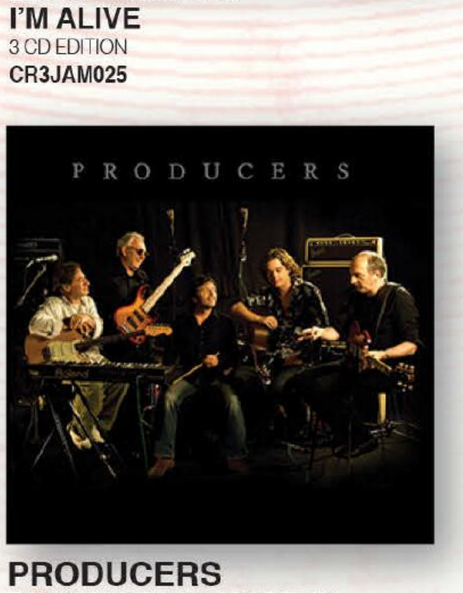

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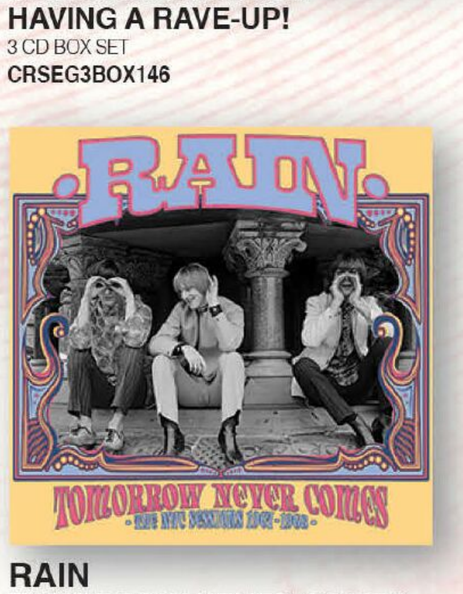

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French Canterbury Tales

TOM PENAGUIN's eponymous solo album could be an unknown recording by Egg or National Health. Using vintage equipment, this 28-year-old Frenchman totally nails the complex yet somehow poppy Canterbury sound. **MICHAEL BJÖRN** finds out how it came about

Although Tom plays and tours with contemporary sounding hard-psych band Djiin, his solo music is fundamentally different. "The album I just released is what I want to do as a musician," he explains. "There is a big gap between liking a song you recorded and liking a song you have played 300 times. I don't want to hate what I'm doing and rather keep it as a solo thing."

Tom started playing the guitar aged six and was making recordings with multiple instruments before becoming a teenager. The new album was recorded in his bedroom. "There's only gear and the bed," says Tom pointing around his cramped room.

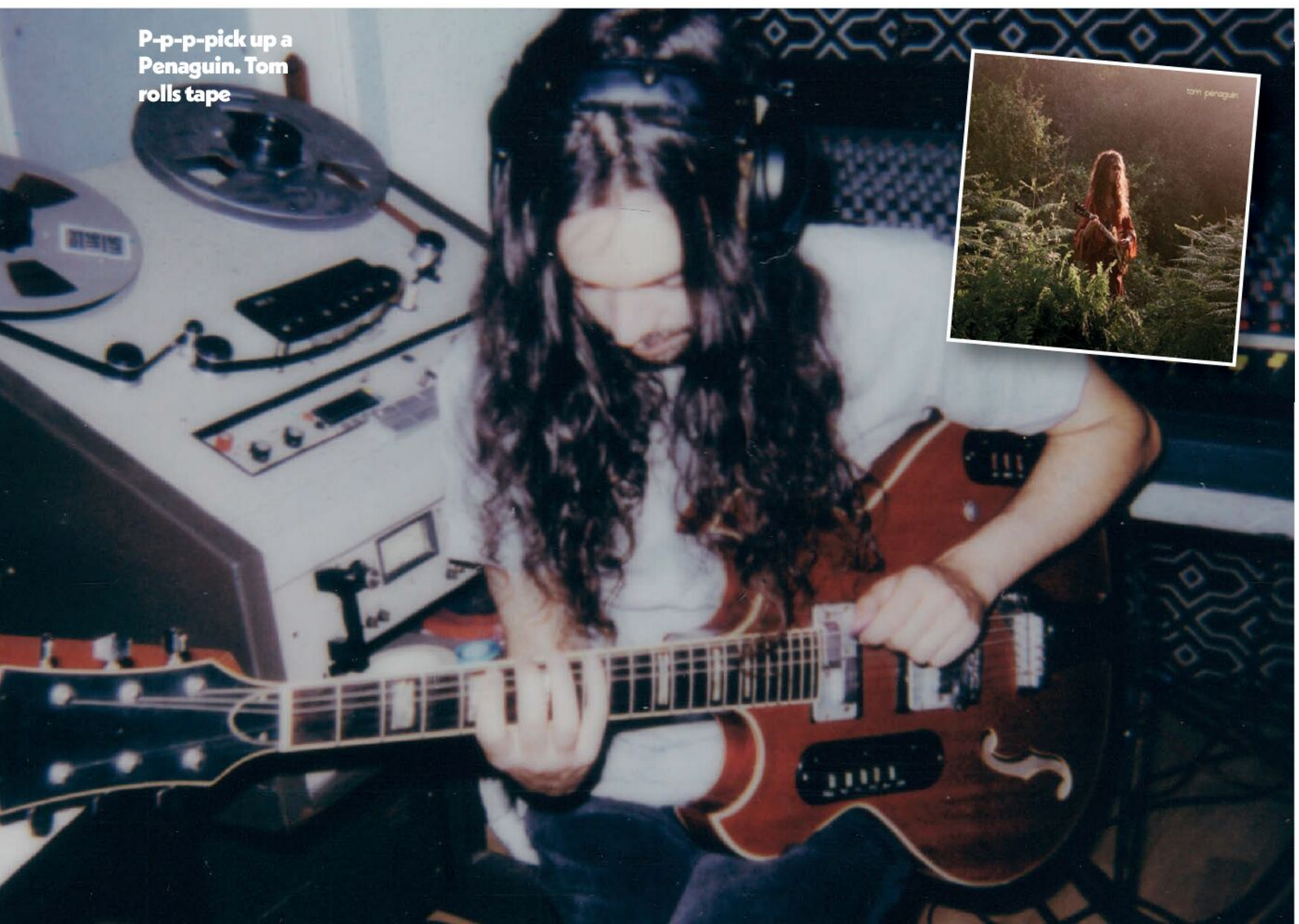
And the gear is all vintage. "As a teenager, I got interested in vintage organs and keyboards," he says. "Watching videos of people playing such instruments, I became aware of prog bands," says Tom. But more specifically, his music is uncannily Canterbury-esque. "I went back to the roots of Canterbury music," explains Tom. "The tracks that Mont Campbell composed for Egg have a strong Stravinsky influence. So I looked at which patterns of notes and chord shapes Stravinsky used."

Even the track titles reek of Canterbury. "Sort of pataphysical," jokes Tom. "I don't care about the the titles, but I thought maybe at least they could be a bit funny." A case in point is central track 'Housefly Leg'. "It has everything that I want to develop and is representative of myself – and I have very thin legs" says Tom smilingly. A beautiful keyboard driven track, it ebbs and flows with a keen melodic sense. "Maybe for the first time in my life, I could hear what I really want to do as an artist," he adds.

Despite having written the whole album using keyboards, Tom sees himself primarily as a guitarist. This is quite evident on tracks like 'Arrival Of The Great Hedgehog'. "A big chunk of this song is the big guitar solo in the middle," he explains. "The other instruments are playing something repetitive that doesn't feel like it's repetitive, and I solo over it. The guitar is my way to speak, in a sense." But tonally and texturally, the track remains very much a Canterbury piece.

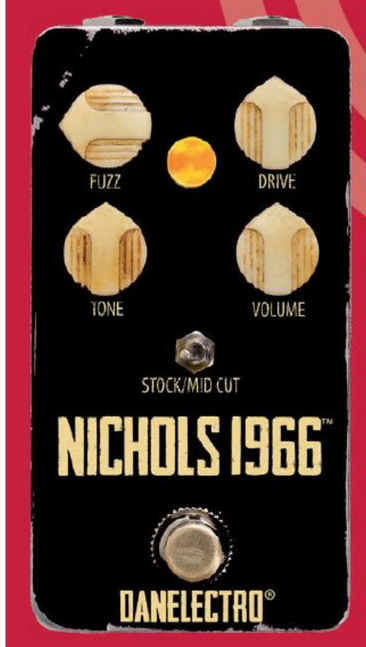
Not surprisingly, Tom has sent a copy of the album to Dave Stewart, who (so far) hasn't responded. But everyone else should sit up and listen!

Tom Penaguin is out now on áMARXE



P-p-p-pick up a Penaguin. Tom rolls tape

good news



They've gotta fuzzbox and you're gonna use it! **DANELECTRO** has announced as a new addition to its product line the Nichols 1966 effects pedal, which promises guitar players "everything from volcanic, searing fuzz to subtle amp-like overdrive tones", operated with an uncomplicated four-knob control set. Other new items bearing the iconic brand name include the reissued Coral electric "big sitar". Employed by scores of '60s artists from Stevie Wonder to The Lemon Pipers, the instrument is ideal for replicating distinctive Indian tones and textures and is available in black or white models. Further details and the full range of instruments and accessories are available on the company website.
danelectro.com

Music promoter Choir Of Outsiders has revealed details of this year's **NORTHGATE FOLK FESTIVAL**, which will take place at Alexander's Live in Chester on Saturday 24th August. With a focus on innovators who honour musical tradition while adding a new contemporary twist, the headliners are Stick In The Wheel, whose fusion of folk and electronica has won them widespread acclaim. Other acts in the packed line-up include Frankie Archer, Nick Hart, Mary Elizabeth Remington, Goblin Band and Stone Club. Dancing displays include a Morris troupe who wield pickaxe handles rather than handkerchiefs, the blades presumably a little too cutting edge!
alexanderslive.seetickets.com

Last month we mentioned that Brighton will be one of the three cities celebrating psychedelic music over a long weekend this summer. The second of these tribal gatherings is **MANCHESTER PSYCH FEST** on Saturday 31st August. Early bird tickets are available now for the multi-venue event. The enticingly large, varied and increasingly immersive programme includes more than 60 performers, including *Shindig!*-endorsed acts Temples, Altın Gün, BC Camplight, La Luz, The New Eves and a surprise return for The Horrors. Film, art installations and interactive workshops are all promised for what should prove one of the musical experiences of the season.
manchesterpsychfest.com

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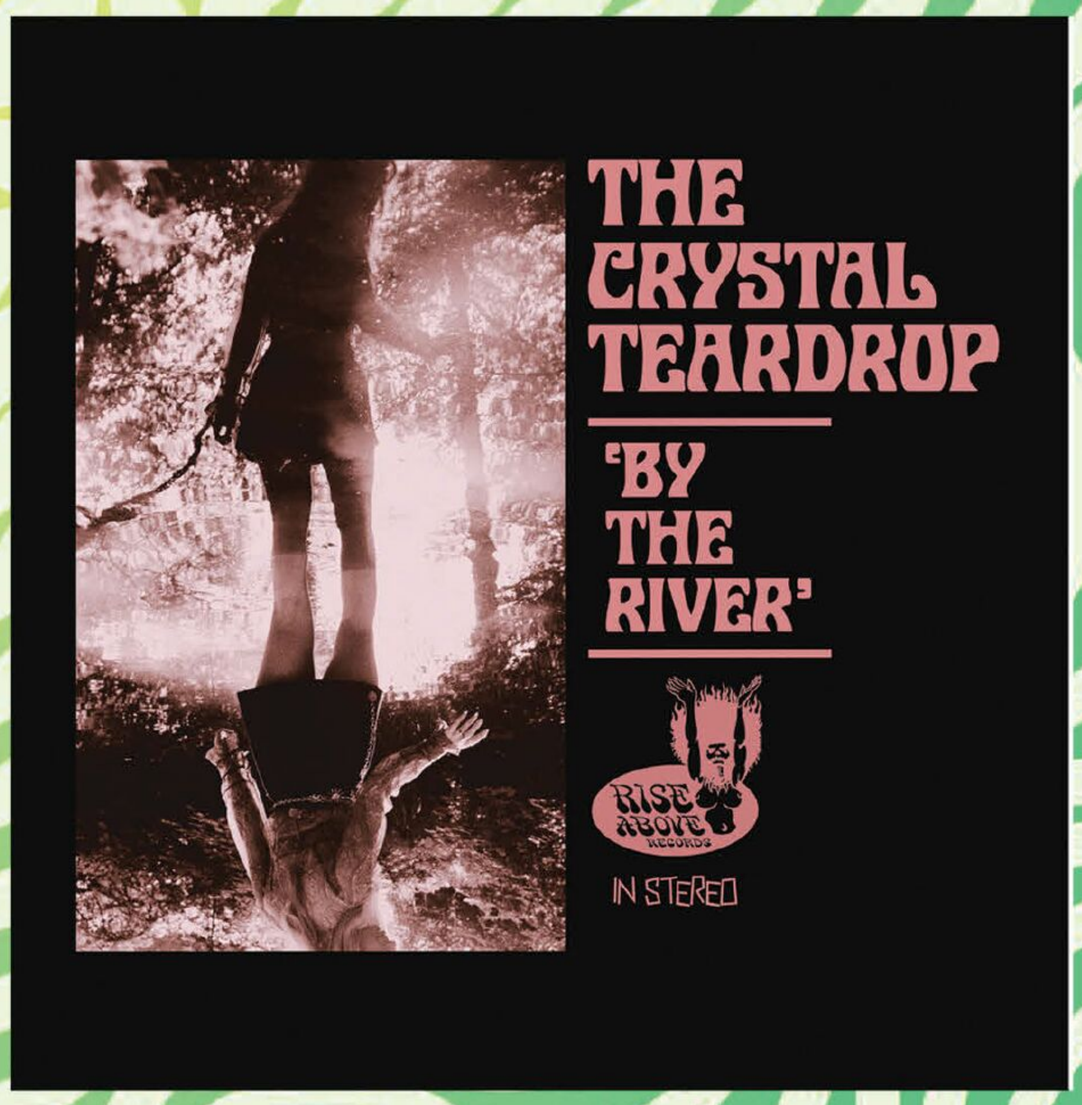

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in the **studio**

Get Out Of The Box

HOLLOW HAND share their current studio activities and recording process with **JON 'MOJO' MILLS**

Debuting in 2015 with the hallucinogenic bedroom-recorded epic *Ancestral Lands*, conceived after reading *Electric Eden*, Max Kinghorn-Mills aka Hollow Hand then continued to shape his distinctive craft, releasing the more refined *Star Chamber* in 2018, and *Your Adventure* last year, to unanimous rave reviews and comparisons favourably made to George Harrison, The Lilac Time, Stealers Wheel and The Byrds.

Now after significant time on the road, playing material from the previous two albums with drummer Oliver Newton, Leo Clark (bass) and Chris Mathewson (guitar), Hollow Hand have become far more honed as a band. "I always want recording to be like *Get Back* and it never bloody ends up like that," says Max of his ideal recording process. "But it's nice to be able to collaborate with Ollie a bit more this time."

Max and Ollie are currently working together in their recording space in Portslade, just outside Brighton, with the view of bringing the others in where possible. As Hollow Hand records happen by osmosis, with Max doing the main share, it's hard to say at this stage in the early tracking if there will be further collaborators: Midlake/Harp's Tim Smith, Holly Macve and Spencer Cullum all contributed to the last.

"I have so many different songs," he states, "it could easily go in all manner of directions. So far, I guess it's feeling a bit more like a 'Neil Young in the barn thing' maybe, because I've changed to a Telecaster recently." His reissued 1957 Fender Deluxe amp is also key to this sound.

The recording studio set-up itself is centred around an '84 Ted Fletcher eight-track mixing desk. "We've got a couple of cassette things too. We're basically patching a lot of things through the desk. It's all very complicated. We want to have the freedom to chuck things through, mess them up and then bring them back in and try and get out the box of the computer a little bit."

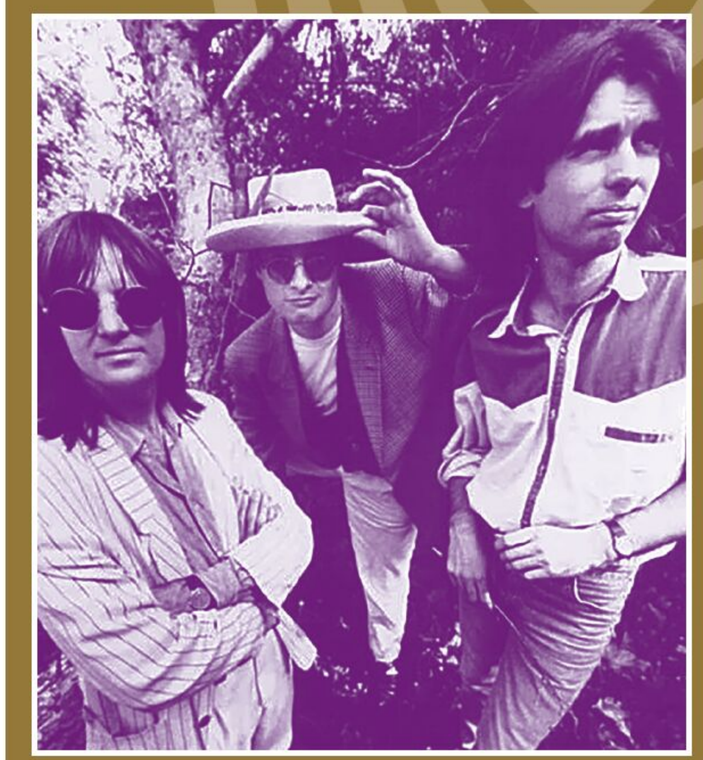
Having heard two songs as works in progress, *Shindig!* can wholeheartedly confirm that album number four is going to further Hollow Hand's mission of combining Beatley folk-ish pop with easy-going rock 'n' roll and experimentation via a non-typical musical mindset. Expect great things.

"I always want it to be like *Get Back* and it never bloody ends up like that"

The untitled album is due early next year. Interested labels should contact hollowhand.com

Max and Ollie, weaving a patchwork

next issue



XTC
All aboard *The Big Express*. Andy Partridge and Colin Moulding share their journey

THE RASCALS
Part Two. No longer "young" and on the road to freedom and spirituality

JOHN CALE
Underground overground. His early '70s emergence as an off-kilter pop force

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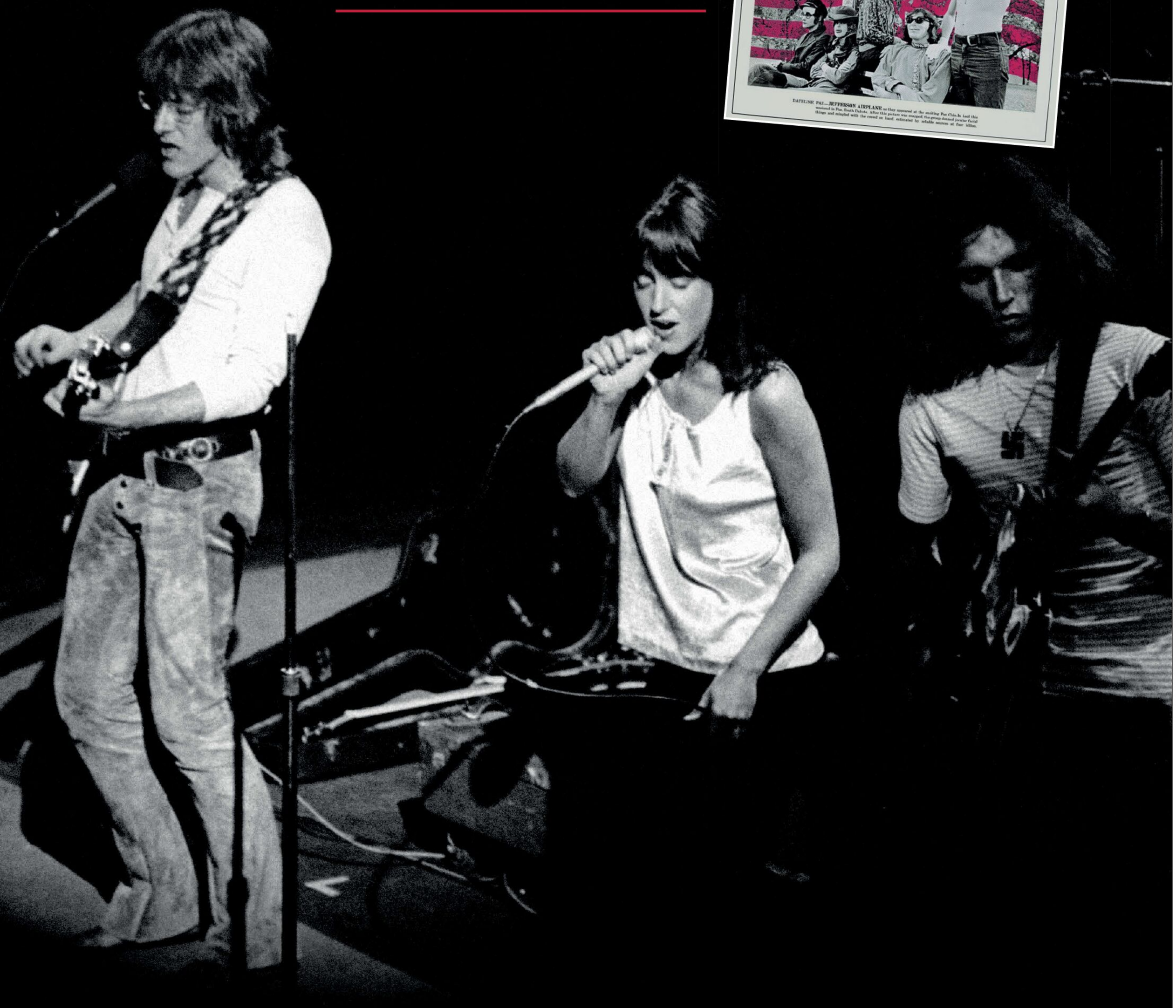
We Are Outlaws

JEFFERSON AIRPLANE merged provocation inspired by a group of cultural anarchists with anti-war anthems, ecological themes and country-rock for their fifth album before splintering. **SEÁN CASEY** inspects the background to 1969's ***VOLUNTEERS***, amid profanity rows, revolution and the dissolution of the '60s dream



"While you're climbing up the charts, your plane just fell apart." Paul Kantner, Grace Slick and Jorma Kaukonen tell it like it is in 1969

When Dick Cavett introduced Jefferson Airplane on his show on 19th August 1969, he wasn't expecting to hear "up against the wall, motherfucker", sung moments later. The group, alongside fellow performers Joni Mitchell, David Crosby and Stephen Stills, arrived at the studio direct from Woodstock, *the* defining moment of '60s counterculture.

"Everybody is always trying to define today's rock music and there are phrases like 'hard-rock', 'folk-rock', 'acid-rock', 'revolution-rock' and 'shlock-rock'", Cavett began. "We have none of that on the show today," he falsely asserted before the band launched into 'We Can Be Together'.

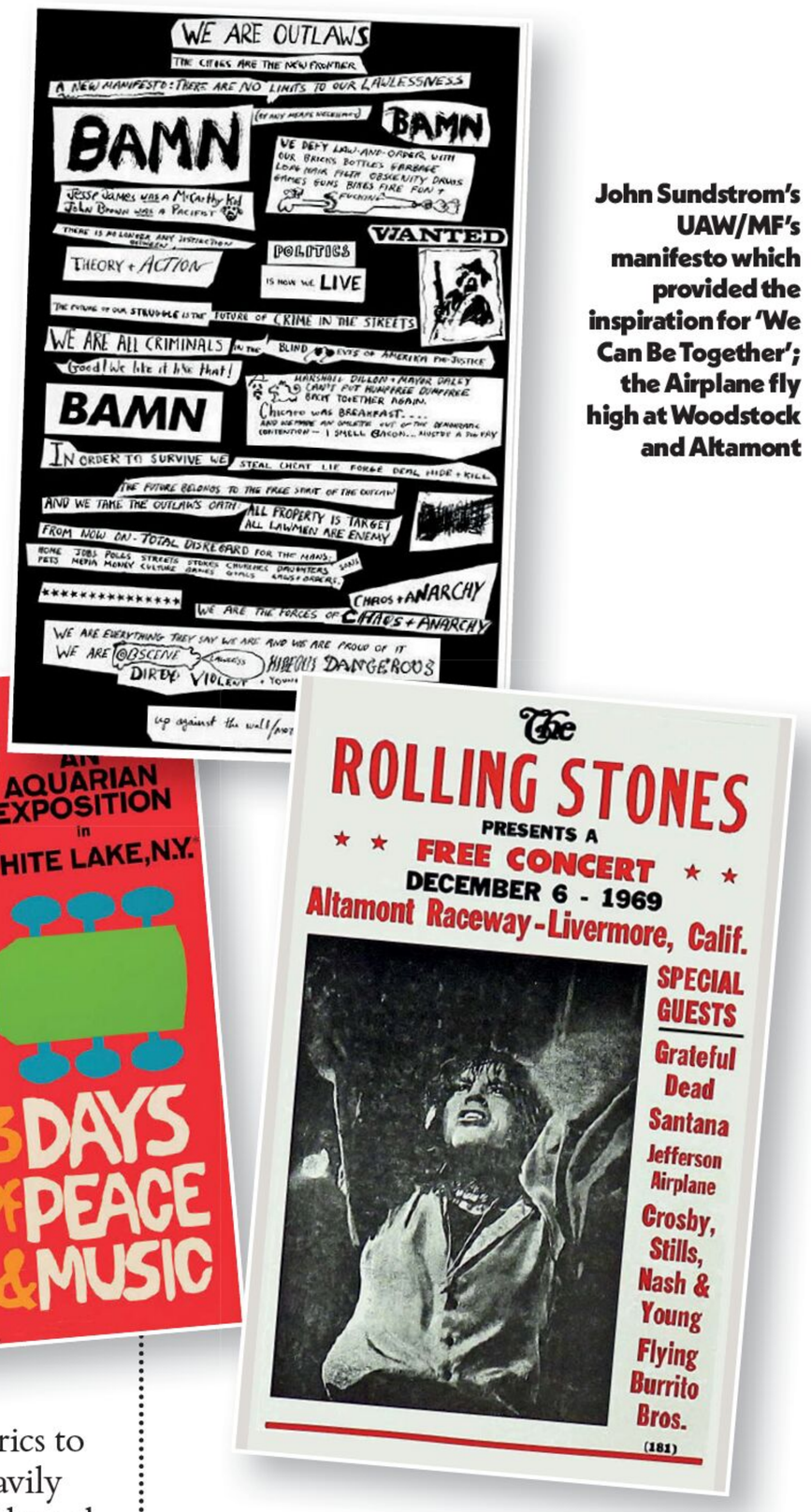
In fact, the album that followed was all of the above, bar the shlock. Though an exaggeration to describe it as a radical departure from their previous outing, '68's *Crown Of Creation*, it was undoubtedly different, jerking and easing dependent on who was holding the pen of Airplane's classic line-up of Marty Balin, Paul Kantner, Grace Slick, Jorma Kaukonen, Jack Casady and Spencer Dryden. It's a stubborn record to pin down, boasting as many styles as guests in the hanger, which included Nicky Hopkins – whose pervasive piano provides a polished sheen to an otherwise raw affair – Crosby, Stills, Jerry Garcia and Joey Covington (who joined permanently soon after).

Recorded at Wally Heider's San Francisco studio between March and August '69 at the height of the group's drug intake and amid a tumultuous time in the US following the Manson murders, mounting tensions with Russia, and escalating conflict in Vietnam. If '67's *Surrealistic Pillow* signified the beginning of the counterculture party, *Volunteers* – issued five weeks before the Altamont free concert – inhabits the dawn of the gathering. Drinks have been reduced to dregs and dishevelled disputes sour the air as taxis rescue the sensible.

Though already intrinsically linked to the hippie convergence of Haight-Ashbury and outwardly supportive of the groundswell of Civil Rights (Slick concluded a dubious '68 performance with a Black Panther fist), *Volunteers* is more politically charged, revealing new moral and sonic inspiration. "We were being influenced by some of the bands around us," Casady said to Hugh Fielder in 2021. "Cream had come over and opened up all kinds of possibilities. And I became good buddies with Mitch Mitchell of The Jimi Hendrix Experience."

The heavier sound spearheaded by Kaukonen and Casady (who appear on the Experience's 'Voodoo Chile') was contrasted by a return to folk and country roots, but while its musical direction was universally backed, not everyone was on-board for the politics. "It was, 'We will break your laws at our leisure,'" Kantner told Ed Vulliamy in 2007. "For me it was political. And the band got irritated by this – they were like the [Grateful] Dead, just musicians. They didn't want all this revolutionary shit."

"RCA had censors there waiting with scissors to cut out 'motherfuckers' from 'We Should Be Together' *(sic)*"



John Sundstrom's UAW/MF's manifesto which provided the inspiration for 'We Can Be Together'; the Airplane fly high at Woodstock and Altamont

Part love letter to liberalism, part rallying cry for change, Kantner's lyrics to 'We Can Be Together' borrowed heavily from radicals on the east coast who blurred the lines of civil disobedience and direct force. A collective of proto-punk beatniks, anarchic poets, and anti-art artists Up Against The Wall, Motherfucker (UAW/MF) was originally formed as Black Mask by Ben Morea and Dan Georgakas, who were uncompromising in their bombast. "Destroy the museums. Our struggle cannot be hung on walls," one flyer read. "Like the streets of Watts, we burn with revolution."

Taking inspiration from the Black liberation and Situationist International movements, the group's activities ranged from protesting Wall Street capitalism and shutting down The Museum Of Modern Art, to defending the '68 shooting of Andy Warhol.

That same year, "Motherfucker" John Sundstrom produced a flyer for *avant-garde* newspaper *The East Village Other,* outlining UAW/MF's manifesto. It read, "We are outlaws… in order to survive, we steal, cheat, lie, forge, deal, hide and kill," and "we are obscene, lawless, hideous, dangerous, dirty, violent and young."

Charles Radcliffe, a member of the English chapter of Situationists – and affiliate of UAW/MF – supposedly shared the flyer with Kantner, who used its anti-establishment message as the basis for the song, tempering its "by any means necessary" intensity, substituting "kill" with "fuck".

It wasn't the only track to include profanity. 'Eskimo Blue Day', written by Slick and Kantner, pre-warns of the effects of global warming ("If you don't mind heat in your river") and – coupled with the opening song – its refrain "doesn't mean shit to a tree" made label executives nervous, forcing a three-week stand-off upon the album's completion. RCA relented after it was pointed out that musical *Hair* (also released on the label) included choice language too.

Kantner recounted a different story in a '70 interview with *Rolling Stone*. "[RCA] had censors there waiting with scissors to cut out 'motherfuckers' from 'We Should Be Together' *(sic)*. But they had fucked the sound up so much when we did it that we spent a whole night in New York blasting at them and telling them how shitty they were."

Thought to relate to Slick's love for Nietzsche, 'Hey Frederick' finds Airplane at the height of their acidic powers, switching between hard-rock and tender melody; Slick's unmistakable vocals laying the foundation for an extended jam indicative of their live performances. She later offered a glimpse into its ambiguous lyrics. "People are telling you, 'No you can't. Don't. It's not right. It's not this.' You just go and do it. Forget about it."

Though Kantner and Slick were alone in their revolutionary intent, *Volunteers* was a team affair. Among the album's stand-outs is 'Good Shepherd', a Kaukonen arrangement spinning a traditional gospel ballad into spiritual folk-rock, exemplifying the band's

Kaukonen, Slick, Kantner, Marty Balin, Spencer Dryden and Jack Cassady share a little joke (and perhaps a little toke)

creative cohesion, despite their emerging differences.

Kaukonen also wrote 'Turn My Life Down', though its Motown-inspired origins are lost amid Stephen Stills' Hammond and Balin's vocals, which were laid down when its writer struggled. "I realised there is no way I can sing the song the way I would like it to be sung," Kaukonen said. "We had a great male voice in the band, and Marty did good with it."

Kantner penned the enduring 'Wooden Ships' with Stills and Crosby on a boat in Florida. Crosby remembered the song fondly before his death. "I already had some pieces of a song, and before you knew it, we took what I had and blew it up into 'Wooden Ships'," he told Joe Bosso. "It was a significant moment for me, because I realised, 'Wow, you don't have to write this shit all by yourself; you can collaborate with other people.'"

Stills and Kantner's lyrics depict post-apocalyptic survival amid the growing threat of nuclear war, a theme Kantner revisited on his debut solo album. Remarkably, both versions were recorded at Wally's in April '69 (with many of the same musicians) and performed by the two acts respectively during their sets at Woodstock. "I thought it was cool for the fans because they got two very different visions of the song," Crosby stated.

Written by Kantner and Gary Blackman, who provided the title for '67 Airplane album *After Bathing At Baxters,* 'The Farm' is the first of two country songs and features Jerry Garcia on pedal steel guitar alongside Nicky Hopkins' uplifting piano. Authored by Dryden, the second, a 'Song For All Seasons', was the first new material recorded. It was inspired by a conversation with Al Kooper; its sarcastic, honky-tonk-plod providing the canvas for Dryden *et al* to observe the instability of life as a musician, containing the prophetic line, "While you're climbing up the charts, your plane just fell apart."

Even the funeral march-esque instrumental performed on organ by Slick, 'Meadowlands' (in fact 'Polyushko-polye' by Russian composer Lev Knipper) came with a message. "It's the theme song of The Soviet Army," Kantner said. "So, we sort of threw that in there as a snub to the establishment."

Title track and bookend 'Volunteers', was used by Robert Zemeckis in his award-winning movie *Forrest Gump*, but while the film's recreated march on The Pentagon occurred two years earlier in real life, Kantner's anthem reflects the divisive atmosphere captured in the scene. "It's sort of really celebrating consciousness again, rather than being a call to arms," he remembered. "And asking people not to put themselves on the line but into the process of contributing."

Though Kantner gave the theme context, it was conceived by Balin in unrevolutionary fashion. "I got woken up by a Volunteers Of America truck picking up some stuff. I dashed off that lyric in my sleep and gave it to Paul that day and he wrote the rest."

Profanity aside, it wasn't plain sailing upon completion. Originally named *Volunteers Of Amerika* (spelt to imply fascist oppression), it was shortened when the religious charity bearing the same name threatened legal action.

Equally subversive, the artwork included a fold-out poster reading "Revolt" and "Feed And Water Your Flag", a satirical comic strip likening the American flag to a firearm, and a random peanut butter and jam sandwich.

Soon after its release in November, Dryden left, followed a year later by Balin, who was knocked unconscious at Altamont and growing increasingly tired of excess and ego. "Some of the chemicals made people crazy and very selfish, and it just wasn't any fun to be around for me. So I bailed," he told *Relix* magazine in '93.

Starting as a side project, Kaukonen and Casady's Hot Tuna took centre stage as Slick and Kantner formed a new line-up before transforming the plane into a starship.

Lacking the consistency of their earlier work, *Volunteers* is a jumbled affair – a mainly disconnected collection of songs curated by diverging artists with different motivations. Yet, it manages to perfectly manifest the unique chemistry forged between these musicians as the '60s dream dwindled. So, while it may not be the harbingers of hip at the top of their game, it's still fucking great. And that's all we have to say about that. S!

Uncited interview excerpts taken from Got A Revolution: The Turbulent Flight Of Jefferson Airplane by Jeff Tamarkin

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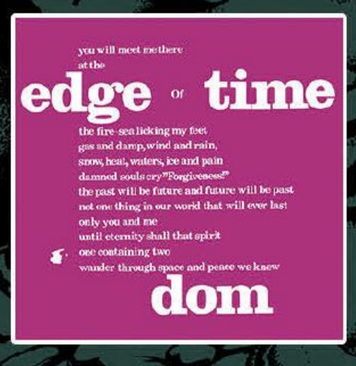

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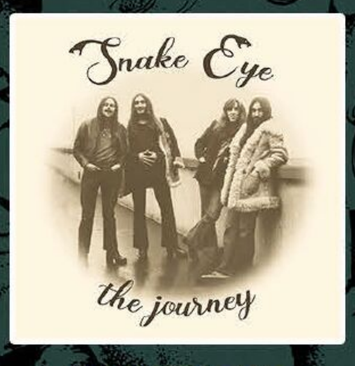


SNAKE EYE
The Journey
LP

SUNLIGHT
Creation of Sunlight
LP / Digital

deep cuts

Karma Chameleons

Following Karma Sutra's Top 10 success with The Lovin' Spoonful, in 1967 label executives launched offshoot **BUDDAH RECORDS** (allegedly with mob backing) to circumvent a restricting distribution deal with MGM. With its finger firmly on the pulse of the swiftly moving times, during its heyday, it signed both defining and fleetingly popular artists of the late '60s and early '70s, including Curtis Mayfield, Captain Beefheart, Melanie and The Lemon Pipers. Among the heavy hitters and bubblegum-pop came an assortment of weird, wonderful and rarely seen singles.

SEÁN CASEY gets enlightened

BONGI & JUDY
Runnin' Out / Let's Get Together
(Buddah, October 1967)

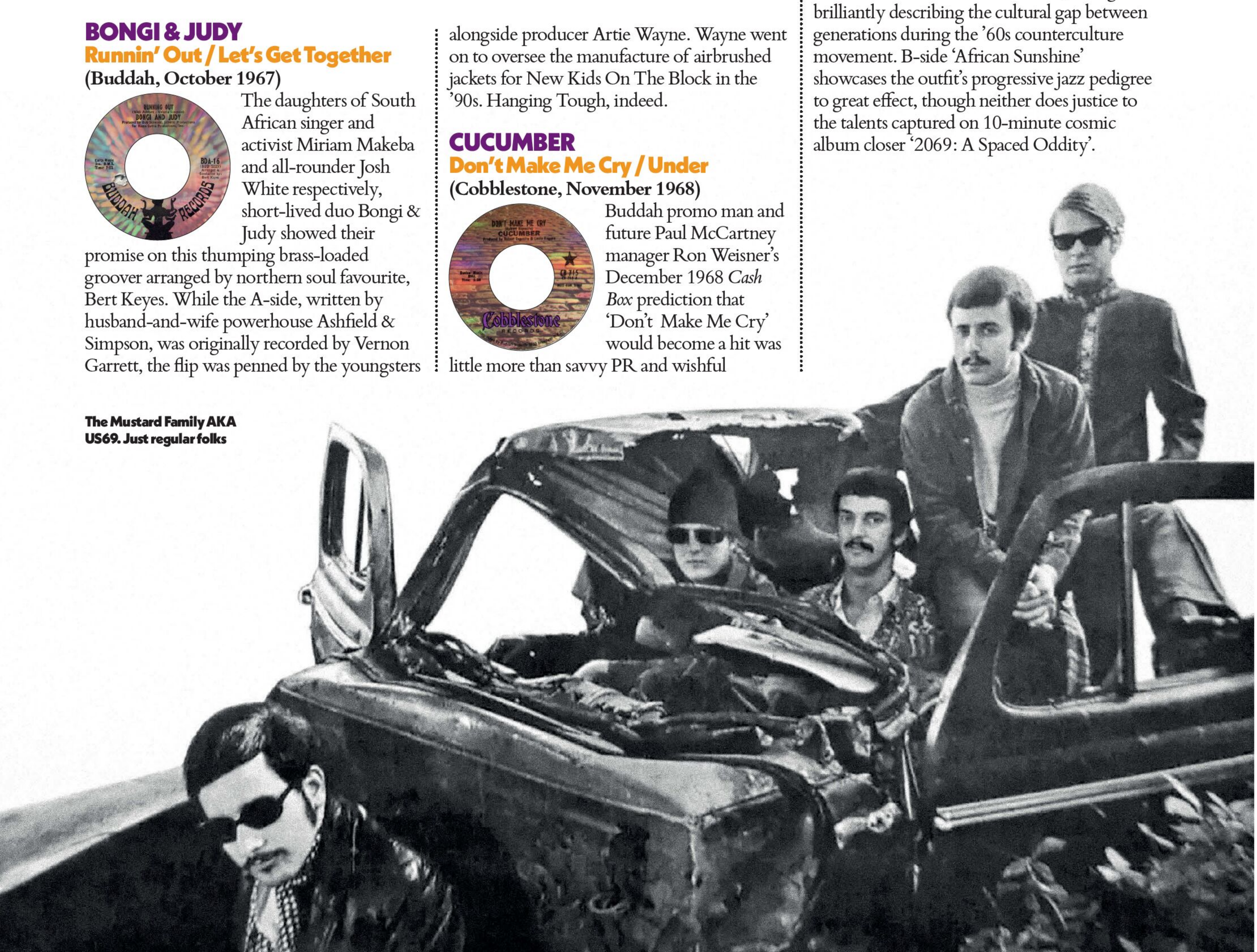
The daughters of South African singer and activist Miriam Makeba and all-rounder Josh White respectively, short-lived duo Bongi & Judy showed their promise on this thumping brass-loaded groover arranged by northern soul favourite, Bert Keyes. While the A-side, written by husband-and-wife powerhouse Ashfield & Simpson, was originally recorded by Vernon Garrett, the flip was penned by the youngsters alongside producer Artie Wayne. Wayne went on to oversee the manufacture of airbrushed jackets for New Kids On The Block in the '90s. Hanging Tough, indeed.

CUCUMBER
Don't Make Me Cry / Under
(Cobblestone, November 1968)

Buddah promo man and future Paul McCartney manager Ron Weisner's December 1968 *Cash Box* prediction that 'Don't Make Me Cry' would become a hit was little more than savvy PR and wishful thinking. Like the distorted cousin of Iron Butterfly's 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida' released earlier that year, this amazing slab of eerie garage-psych on imprint Cobblestone failed to chart. Instrumental acid dirge 'Under' was believed to have been written for a film, which isn't the only hearsay regarding its composer Robert Esposito. Prior to Cucumber, Esposito led The You Know Who Group, whose gimmick of hiding their identities was so effective that they were rumoured to be Merseybeat group The Undertakers (featuring a pre-Apple Jackie Lomax). In reality, they were from Brooklyn, but encouraged to sing with British accents by their label, a fact cleared up by producer Bob Gallo in 2011.

THE MUSTARD FAMILY
Yesterday's Folks / African Sunshine
(Buddah, March 1969)

Following the release of their bewilderingly under-the-radar debut LP in March 1969, Connecticut trippy-jazz-rockers US69 abandoned their time-stamped moniker just months later, issuing their one and only single as The Mustard Family. On the A-side is the album's title track, a song brilliantly describing the cultural gap between generations during the '60s counterculture movement. B-side 'African Sunshine' showcases the outfit's progressive jazz pedigree to great effect, though neither does justice to the talents captured on 10-minute cosmic album closer '2069: A Spaced Oddity'.



The Mustard Family AKA US69. Just regular folks

GENESIS
Journey To The Moon Part I / Journey To The Moon Part II
(Buddah, July 1969)

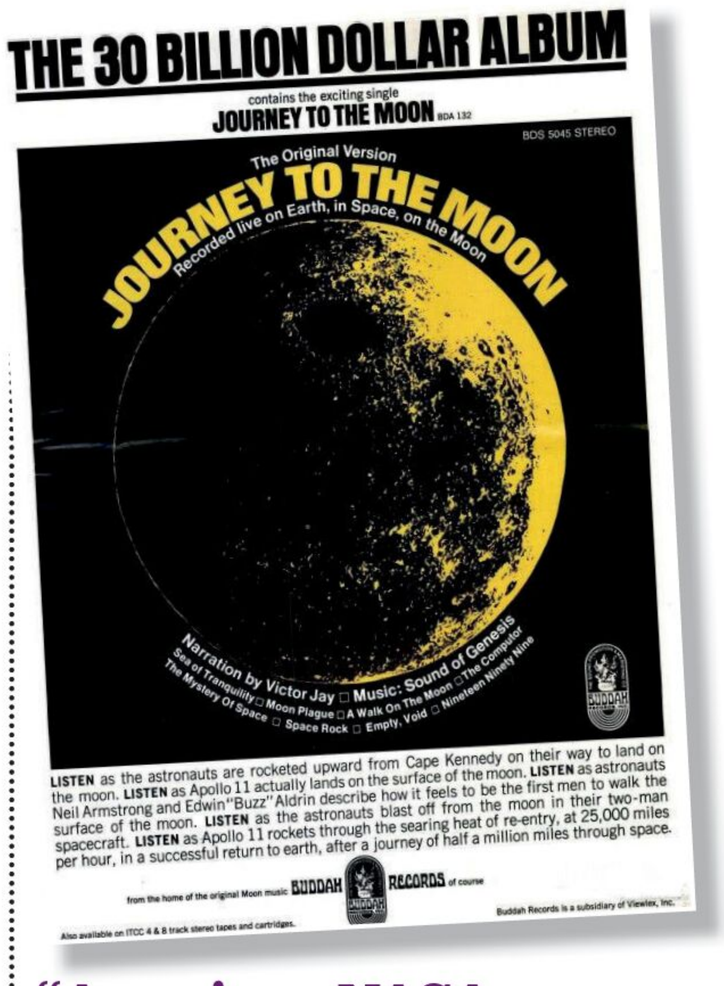
By the late '60s the Space Age had infiltrated most aspects of American culture, no more so than in film and music, with Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* polarising audiences, and The Vienna Philharmonic's take on Strauss' tone poem 'Also Sprach Zarathustra' soundtracking the airwaves. Whether to commemorate or exploit the recent Apollo 11 moon landings, Buddah executive Neil Bogart commissioned an album that ultimately became *Journey To The Moon*. The record – a curious NASA-approved mixture of instrumental psychedelic rock, pop and soul, underpinning conversations with the astronauts (as well as Richard Nixon) – spawned this solitary 45. The album allegedly features the keyboard wizardry of a young Daryl Hall, which is something we *can* go for.

HORIZON
Tribute (Paint It Black – Ruby Tuesday) / Back Street Woman
(Buddah, August 1969)

Despite reference to two Stones songs in the title, 'Tribute' in fact blends 'Paint It Black' and 'Ruby Tuesday' with the unmistakable refrain from 'Satisfaction' played on cello, alongside a Latin nod to The Electric Prunes' 'Kyrie Eleison'. 'Back Street Woman' was produced by Lewis Merenstein, the man behind Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks* a year earlier. The mysterious Horizon were also known as Jennifer's Friends, Daybreak and, latterly, Smokey John Bull.

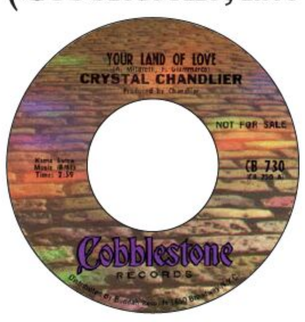
SOUND FOUNDATION
Morning Dew (Walk Me Out In The) / Magic Carpet Ride
(Smo-Bro, October 1969)

Covered by everyone from Lee Hazlewood and Lulu to Grateful Dead and Swiss-German rockers Krokodil, this energetic, horn-heavy funk-rock version of Bonnie Dobson's 1962 song about nuclear disaster (later claimed by Tim Rose) is catnip for fans of Chicago and Electric Flag. LA six-piece Sound Foundation's rendition was issued on the short-lived Smo-Bro label, owned by brothers Tommy and Dick Smothers. Both the single, with an equally funky take on Steppenwolf's enduring 'Magic Carpet Ride' as the B-side, and their self-titled LP, were distributed by Buddah, apparently unsuccessfully given their relative scarcity.



"A curious NASA-approved mixture of instrumental psychedelic rock, pop and soul, underpinning conversations with the astronauts (as well as Richard Nixon)"

CRYSTAL CHANDELIER
Your Land Of Love / Suicidal Flowers
(Cobblestone, late 1969)



Though the fuzzed-out flip 'Suicidal Flowers' is unlikely to be news to obsessive garage-heads due to its inclusion on *Pebbles Volume 3: The Acid Gallery*, the immaculate, dreamy A-side by this mysterious Rhode Island four-piece sounds like the (pun intended) love child of Arthur Lee and Jim Morrison at the height of their lysergic powers. Released on Buddah subsidiary Cobblestone, the band's name was misspelt "Chandilier" adding to the collectability of this rare 45. Cobblestone was temporarily retired later the same year and reestablished as a jazz label in 1971.

THE ELEPHANTS MEMORY
Jungle Gym At The Zoo / Old Man Willow
(Buddah, October 1969)

Another hit at the flicks was *Midnight Cowboy*. Its soundtrack included 'Jungle Gym At The Zoo' and 'Old Man Willow' by experimental rockers (and Lennon and Ono's future backing band) Elephant's Memory, who had recently parted ways with vanity-hating singer, Carly Simon. Though the A-side had been released as the flip to an earlier US single, here it was coupled with 'Willow' – the audible backdrop to Jon Voight's hallucination scene – and issued as a UK-only single to capitalise on the film's success in Europe. Soon after, the New Yorkers released *Songs From Midnight Cowboy*, in reality an LP including only this brace, and versions of John Barry's theme and Fred Neil's 'Everybody's Talkin'' from the soundtrack, amongst disconnected compositions.

GARRY SHERMAN
Peace Lovin' Man / Viet Nam Cantata
(Buddah, October 1970)

Space wasn't the only topic dominating American society in the late '60s. By 1970 Nixon had announced the withdrawal of troops from the US's disastrous conflict in Vietnam, leading Broadway musical arranger Garry Sherman to base his four-movement, anti-war play on distressing paintings returned from Vietnam by an American soldier. While a full album appears not to have been issued, this obscure promo contains two pieces, including 'Peace Lovin' Man'. Its jaunty country groove betrays the harrowing subtext provided by Nashville vocalist Gene Pistilli. The flip, subtitled 'Soldiers Recite', is atmospherically opposed, a foreboding poetic refrain portraying the sensory terror of war, narrated by baritone vocalist Milt Grayson and other cast members. According to local reports, the cantata was performed live in New York by a "13-piece chamber orchestra, a 16-voice mixed chorus and electronic devices" including "pre-recorded sounds". Archive labels, where you at?

LENA HORNE
Maybe I'm Amazed / Feels So Good
(Buddah, UK, June 1971)

By the turn of the decade, tastes had changed. Bubblegum pop was passé, and record companies were less willing to take a punt on unknown garage bands or psychedelic jazz troupes in search of a hit. Buddah was no different, and though it had already branched out, by 1971, as well as acting as a home for former stars such as Bill Haley and Chubby Checker, it had pivoted to R&B, funk and soul, issuing records by artists growing in stature such as Gladys Knight, Curtis Mayfield and Bill Withers. Singer and civil rights activist Lena Horne was embarking on her fourth decade of recording by the time she flipped Macca's lo-fi ode to wife Linda into this funky affair. Upbeat B-side 'Feels So Good', composed by Ralph MacDonald and William Salter, the duo who went onto write Withers' omni-present 'Just The Two Of Us', opens Horne's first and last studio album for Buddah, *Nature's Baby*. S!

back to back

Doin' Their Thing And Singin' Their Song

Perhaps the ultimate (Dutch) sleeper hit, '**I'M ALIVE**' was thrown away on a B-side by **TOMMY JAMES & THE SHONDELLS** and indirectly picked up by **DON FARDON** to become a mod club favourite.

MARTIN RUDDOCK breathes in the clean, fresh air

Tommy James & The Shondells in their imperial psychedelic phase, 1968

TOMMY JAMES & THE SHONDELLS

I'm Alive

First released: *Crimson & Clover*, Roulette, December 1968

In late 1968, just before the album market and the FM radio boom reared up to eat the US whole, everything was coming up Tommy James (and to a lesser degree, the Shondells). Having racked up a run of tough, ear-nagging bubblegum hits over the last couple of years, Tommy took to songwriting after hitting big with his co-written smash 'Mony Mony' and didn't look back.

The self-penned, self-produced 'Crimson And Clover' went nuclear in November, followed immediately by the album of the same name a month later. Every track was homegrown, barring middling single 'Do Something To Me'. There was a future hit in 'Crystal Blue Persuasion' that James and Roulette boss Morris Levy parked to rush out 'Sweet Cherry Wine', from in-progress next album, *Cellophane Symphony* in March. When 'Crystal Blue Persuasion' finally came out as a 45 in May '69, on its B-side was another potential hit that Tommy had already given away. First issued in Canada on the Calla label in late '68, 'I'm Alive' (written by James and Shondells drummer Peter Lucia) was roared by former Drifter Johnny Thunder – who took Tommy's spare song and gave it a good hiding. Thunder's single wasn't the breakout hit it should have been, but its ferocious, committed performance impressed no less than Bob Dylan, who told *Rolling Stone*'s Jann Wenner in '69 that it was "one of the most powerful records I've ever heard".

We all know 'I'm Alive'. A groovy four chord blast of positivity, it's an ode to the joy of just existing: "Breathin' clean, fresh air." Tommy was having no part of the high era of acid ego death and altered perception, pointedly writing, "I'm *real*! / I can see and touch and taste and feel, I'm alive." There's even an all-nations declaration of being all colours and creeds: "I'm red and yellow and black and tan, I'm a man."

Don Fardon. Stayin' alive

James has seldom mentioned 'I'm Alive', but the Shondells' arrangement is almost identical to the Thunder 45, sharing the same prowling bass line, fuzz riff and twiddly Carl Wilson-like guitar trills – albeit better mixed and sonically shinier. It's unclear whether Thunder's treatment was already in the can or not when Tommy tackled his song for *Crimson & Clover*, but he opted not to emulate Thunder's throat-shredding performance or his call and response break – choosing to shift the opening yell of "I'm alive!" at the beginning of each verse forward a bar and sassily talk-sing it, before following the original melody, rearranged for vocal harmonies. Towards the end Tommy channels his inner Thunder with a series of bloodcurdling screams, which he notably opted not to mime when the Shondells performed the song on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in June '70, (a fabulous explosion of hair and purpleness you can find on YouTube).

In more recent years James has reclaimed his old cast-off. His remake on 2019's *Alive* album is not for the faint-hearted, but he's doin' his thing and singin' his song, so we can hardly begrudge him.

"Bob Dylan told *Rolling Stone*'s Jann Wenner in '69 that it was 'one of the most powerful records I've ever heard'"

DON FARDON

I'm Alive

First released: Young Blood single, August 1969

When former Sorrows frontman Don Fardon signed a solo contract in 1967, the Coventry-born singer didn't realise how much of his career (already impaired by a contract dispute with old label Pye) would be spent waiting for his recordings to become belated hits or buried treasure.

It's unknown exactly when Fardon's explosive version of 'I'm Alive' was recorded, and Don's hopelessly confused, nosebleed-inducing discography doesn't help narrow the search. Fardon's 45s and LPs would crop up on a dizzying array of labels worldwide, with tracks repeated randomly all over five US and Euro LPs, not to mention two wildly different versions of '70's *Released* (which share the same title, the same sleeve but only the first track). Don remembered cutting quite a few tracks in the September '68 session that produced his future global hit 'Indian Reservation' (a worldwide smash when reissued in '70, are you still with us gang? *Gang?*) with producer Miki Dallon. "He'd been to America and come back with a boxful of demos," Don told *Midlands Music Stories* in 2012

As Tommy James had yet to release his own version in Autumn '68, it seems more likely that a promo of Johnny Thunder's single was in the box that Dallon brought to the 'Indian Reservation' session. Based on Don's berserk delivery of 'I'm Alive', which matches Thunder's paint-peeling phrasing, it seems a dead cert. Dallon's superpop rearrangement takes the key down half a step but keeps the rumbling bass line and throaty fuzz guitar – adding upfront bongos and bombastic strings and blaring horns to create a truly mighty British din. Don also re-jigs the lyric a little further from Thunder's own take on James's line about masculinity and long hair, with a defiant, no-nonsense howl of "I'm a man / Who don't care if my hair's a bit long / I'm a *man*").

Issued in August '69 on a variety of labels worldwide, Fardon's version carried the odd composer credit of 'Lucia-Shondell'. Of all the bizarre picture sleeves, the brilliantly lurid Italian version, which screams "I'M ALIVE" in huge letters over orange flames arguably wins the competition of "record sleeves you can hear". Sadly by '71, Fardon, weary of poor management and living on a pittance, had already started to withdraw – but 'I'm Alive"s appearance on Rob Bailey's seminal 2004 *Le Beat Bespoke* compilation brought it to new ears decades later.

Unexpectedly, off the back of use in adverts for Vodafone and fruit drink *Five Alive*, a 'Big Beat' remix of the single then reached #20 in the Dutch charts in 2011 – leading to a mini Fardon revival. Finally getting paid for his Young Blood-era recordings, a happy, mugging Don cameoed as a gardener in a new, comedy promo video, running away from a rampaging group of very lively pensioners at "St Fardon's Nursing Home". But forget the cheesy remix and Benny Hill video, Fardon's 'I'm Alive' is groovy and loud as fuck – the kind of British pop 45 that could level buildings.

I'm Alive: The Don Fardon Anthology 1967-1974 is out in July on Strawberry

"Producer Miki Dallon had been to America and come back with a boxful of demos"

Climax Sounds

The eclectic world of **J JAZZ** – decades of music made by hundreds of Japanese performers in numerous styles – continues to attract new devotees as its unique twists on Western influences gain their first release outside of their native land. As with much mid- to late 20th century jazz, the album artwork has become almost as covetable as the music.

TONY HIGGINS spotlights 12 favourites from his new pictorial deep dive

Akira Ishikawa & Count Buffaloes

Get Up

Japan has produced some of the very best jazz drummers in the world and Akira Ishikawa was one who played across soundtracks, Afro, fusion, Latin, funk and much more. *Get Up* was recorded in 1975 and is a killer set of fusion-funk break

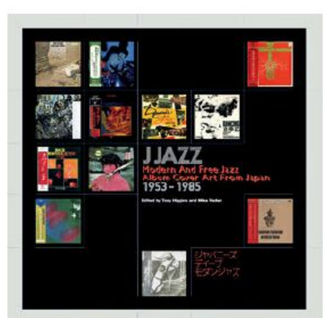
Masahiko Sato Holography

Pianist and composer Sato emerged in the late '60s as a brilliant and prolific pianist who went on to appear on hundreds of sessions covering every jazz style imaginable. He's still active today. *Holography* was his debut solo album, released in 1970.

T Yokota & The Beat Generation

Flute Adventure: Le Soleil Était Encore Chaud

Flautist Toshiaki Yokota released this mesmerising psychedelic jazz trip in 1970 – original pressings are among the rarest artefacts in the J Jazz canon.



J Jazz: Free And Modern Jazz Albums From Japan 1954-1988 by Tony Higgins & Mike Peden is published by BBE

Nobuo Hara & His Sharps And Flats Meets Hōzan Yamamoto

New Jazz In Japan

Nobuo Hara was a major big band leader for over 30 years and in 1968 he hooked up with Hozan Yamamoto, a master of the shakuhachi, the traditional bamboo flute. Yamamoto recorded several jazz albums with the shakuhachi.

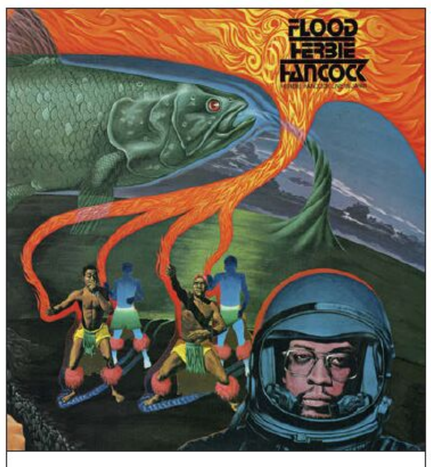
Tetsuya Morimura And His Group

Climax Sound Of Tetsuya Morimura

Cut in 1971 by drummer Tatuya Morimura when he was 16, this super-rare album also features his saxophonist brother Kyoichiroh and pianist Tohru Aizawa. They would all reunite in '75 on the J Jazz Holy Grail private press *Tachibana Vol 1*.

Masabumi Kikuchi Poo Sun

Pianist Kikuchi was a key figure in the development of Japanese jazz in the '70s. This was the first under his own name and features some super electric piano work supported by a killer band.



Herbie Hancock

Flood

Many US jazzers had parallel careers in Japan, issuing material unavailable elsewhere – Herbie Hancock was no exception. Throughout the '70s he recorded many albums solely for the market, including 1975's *Flood*, it's a mind-melting exploration into the funk cosmos.

Various Artists

Jazz In Tokyo '69

A live festival set featuring many of the rising stars of the newly emerging progressive and free-jazz scene who would shape the following decade. Artists featured include Masahiko Sato, Takehiro Honda, Kohsuke Mine and Yosuke Yamashita.

Various Artists

Jazz Message From Tokyo

A 1957 collection that features many of the names that went on to become significant figures in Japanese jazz across the '60s and '70s including Sadao Watanabe, Takeshi Inomata, Hidehiko Matsumoto, Akira Miayazawa and Takayanagi Masayuki.

Kiyoshi Sugimoto Quartet

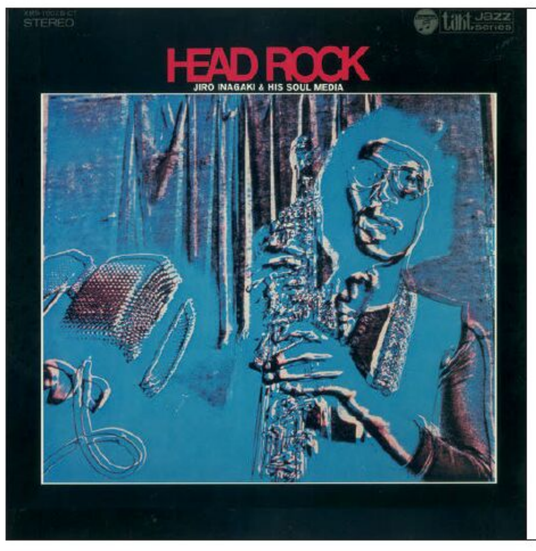
Country Dream

One of the leading jazz guitarists of the era, Sugimoto cut this session in late 1969. It features keyboard wiz Horimasa Suzuki and exemplifies the gently psychedelic yet groovy vibe that characterised so much of the Japanese jazz scene at the time.

Yasutaka Tsutsui, Kosuke Ichihara, Masahiko Sato

Rumour

File under *avant-garde* jazz, experimental, psychedelic, prog-rock – *Rumour* covers all these bases. A real trip into the unknown on this quadrophonic



Jiro Inagaki & Soul Media

Head Rock

Saxophonist Jiro Inagaki was among the pioneers of Japanese jazz-rock and this 1970 album epitomises that sound, bridging funky psych grooves and swinging jazz.

20 questions

Coyly taking the mick out of the classics: Chris Charlsworth (right) and Roy Hollingsworth, the *Melody Maker* office, 1971.
PHOTO: BARRIE WENTZELL

No One Comes In On Tuesdays

CHRIS CHARLESWORTH was there, right in the eye of the storm, during the white-hot period when the '60s gave way to the '70s and "pop" became "rock". As detailed in his memoir *Just Backdated* (named after a lyric by his friend Pete Townshend), Chris experienced it first hand, mixing with the stars, and chronicling the emerging excitement in America leading into the punk era.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS hears about the good ole days

Shindig!: As a kid in prep school in the '50s what impact did the new legion of American rock 'n' roll stars have on you?
Chris Charlesworth: Huge. I loved Elvis when I first heard him, and went on to discover Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, Eddie Cochran, Everly Brothers, everyone really. I was an early convert to rock 'n' roll even though I was only 11 or 12. I also liked records by Black vocal groups like The Drifters, and Tamla and soul when that happened.

***S!*:** Seeing The Beatles in 1963 at 16 – did that feel like your entrance to a new exciting universe? What grabbed you the most about being a teenager in the mid-60s as fashion, music, TV and theatre coalesced?
CC: No one knew in 1963 what The Beatles would become, just that they were the brand leaders in a whole English awakening of pop groups. It was incredibly exciting, even though at first The Beatles thought it might all be over in a couple of years. There was no precedent for a lasting career in what they were doing. Most pop stars ended up as "all-round entertainers", performing in pantomimes over the Christmas season and on pier variety shows at seaside resorts in the summer. Ludicrous as it sounds today, Ringo was hoping he'd make sufficient money to open a hairdressing salon in Liverpool. Music grabbed me more than the other social changes, of course, followed by clothes and wanting to let my hair grow. I loved going into record shops and guitar shops, just to browse. Still do for that matter.

Beat band shenanigans with The Pandas 1964-65. Chris in specs.

***S!*:** Having trained as a journalist on your local newspaper you devoured the weekly music press. Who were the writers that impressed you the most? And why?
CC: I remember thinking that Chris Hutchins, who wrote for *NME*, must have a great life as he seemed to spend all his time hanging out with The Beatles and writing about them. It wasn't so much the quality of his writing that impressed me, just that he seemed to have a fabulous job. It didn't occur to me to follow in his footsteps, not until I was 22 going on 23. I honestly cannot recall the names of any other writers, I didn't look at their by-lines, just at what they wrote.

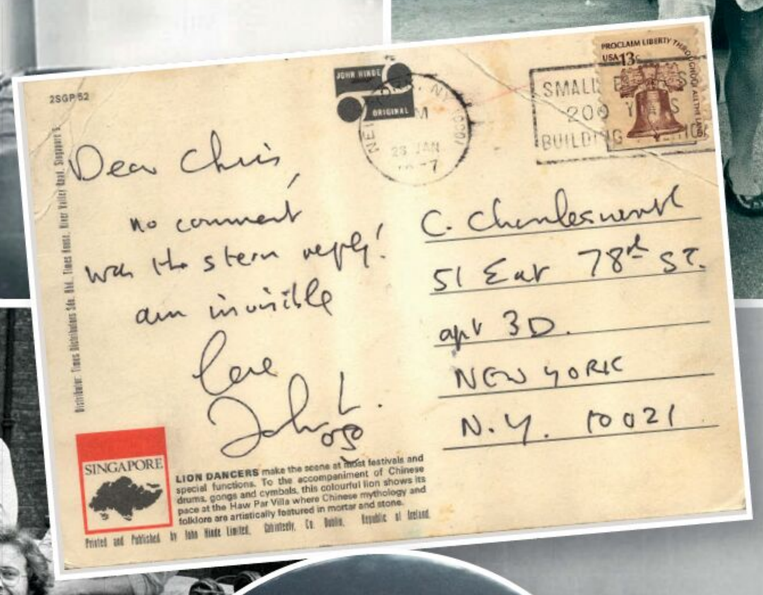
***S!*:** Did the psychedelic era of the late '60s affect you? Did the Granny Takes A Trip attire and the bands who wore it appeal?
CC: I lived in a small market town in northwest Yorkshire in 1967, so psychedelia was a bit of a distant fantasy. I do remember visiting London and on Carnaby Street buying a pair of black flared trousers and an Edwardian style jacket with many buttons, quite revolutionary for where I was raised. I bought a similar pair of flared trousers for my girlfriend in Skipton and she adored me for it, wore them all the time.

***S!*:** The first album you reviewed was Procol Harum's *Shine On Brightly*. What can you remember about the assignment, what you wrote, and your entrance into "rock criticism"?
CC: I can't remember anything about what I wrote about that album, only that it seemed quite "far out" compared to my Beatles and Stones and Who. Quite epic in fact, especially the track 'In Held T'was I'. I was working for the *Bradford Telegraph & Argus*, an evening newspaper, at the time and me and another journalist had approached the editor with an idea for a page of pop music news once a week. He agreed. It was called The Swing Section. I wrote off to record companies asking for review copies of LPs and this Procol Harum record was the first to arrive. The highlight of this period was interviewing Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones on the phone, talking about a new group they'd formed called Led Zeppelin. Neither they nor I knew how big Led Zep would become, let alone that seven years later I'd be flying around America with them.

***S!*:** It was the *Melody Maker*'s new editor Ray Coleman who gave you your first proper music journo job at the beginning of a new decade. How much of an inspiration did Ray and your new colleagues have on you?
CC: Ray only joined *MM* from editing *Disc* just before I arrived, so he wasn't much of an inspiration. Chris Welch was, though, and when I arrived on *MM,* I actually sat at the desk next to him. But within a few weeks I realised Richard Williams was the *MM* writer to look up to really. He was very knowledgeable, dignified somehow, and he was also the presenter of *The Old Grey Whistle Test* on BBC2. I was also impressed with Max Jones, the jazz writer who'd been on *MM* for 20 years or more. Max knew more about jazz than anyone I knew but he was knowledgeable about all kinds of music, especially blues. He was a real character, always complaining about something or other. Ray Coleman was quite a stern boss, a bit of a hard taskmaster, very serious.

***S!*:** Just as you started, "pop" very much became "rock". Free were one of your early assignments. Which of the new acts coming through excited you?
CC: After Free there was Deep Purple. I was especially impressed by their guitarist Ritchie Blackmore whom I thought belonged alongside Clapton, Beck and Page. He thought so too, and the only guitarists who impressed him were Hendrix and Albert Lee. I also spotted Slade before they started to have hits, and I was impressed by how well they played live.

***S!*:** Who would you say were the most unsung band of this era? An act that that had the credentials and made critically well-received records but just didn't take off with the general record buying public?
CC: Probably Nick Drake, though I didn't realise it until later. What is unusual is that Island's PR David Sandison and I became good friends, and he used to give me all the Island albums as promo copies… Traffic, Free, Fairports, Cat Stevens, Marley, you name it… but he never ever gave me a Nick Drake album. Maybe because I really liked



L-R: Deejaying in Skipton 1968; hanging with Slade at Gatwick, '73; with Bruce Springsteen & Mike O'Mahoney from Columbia Records, backstage at the Chrysler Theater, Norfolk, Va, '74; a postcard from John Lennon declining interview, '75; Who pass; the '71 *MM* team – back row, left to right - Laurie Henshaw, folk writer Andrew Means, office manager Roy Birchall, Michael Watts, Chris 'Any Questions' Hayes, features editor Chris Welch, assistant sub Neil Roberts & front row, left to right – CC, Roy Hollingworth, Jeff Starr

PHOTO: BARRIE WENTZELL

Free and Traffic he thought I wouldn't like Nick Drake much. Most PRs in those days and probably today just recommend stuff because they are paid to do so whether they like it or not themselves or whether it's rubbish, but David was a good PR in that he didn't try to oversell things and when he said something was good it probably was. He didn't bullshit, he was sincere, so if he'd said Nick Drake was worth a listen I'd definitely have listened. But he didn't. He never even mentioned him to me. I don't know why or whether I would have liked Drake or not in those days because I was young and a big rock fan in the serious sense of the word, like I loved The Who as everyone knows, so I might have dismissed Drake as a "folkie" who wasn't my cup of tea. Maybe I wouldn't have been mature enough to appreciate him then. I don't know but I'd like to have tried. I liked Cat Stevens, who was also on Island, but I think I got into him because every single attractive girl I ever met in those days seemed to adore Cat Stevens, so it was prudent to agree with them, but Nick Drake's music was far subtler than Cat Stevens or even Paul Simon. It demands greater attentiveness, harder work if you like, but I think it would have been worth the effort even then. I owned a Drake track on the sampler *Nice Enough To Eat*, but I overlooked it somehow. Great shame.

***S!*:** Keith Moon called the *MM* office to personally thank you for a review you wrote and asked you out for a drink. That started a long relationship with both Moon… and The Who. Key anecdotes?

CC: Dozens! Keith was enormously sociable with music writers, far more so than most other musicians of his rank, and this led to all sorts of adventures. There's quite a few in the book but one that isn't is when I actually drove him, in his Rolls Royce, from Chertsey to meet some friends of mine at a pub in Englefield Green, near Egham. It was a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud III, a massive car, and its steering and suspension were so soft it was like driving a wobbly mattress around, or even a boat. You had to turn the steering wheel around and around to negotiate corners and it was on all these narrow country roads in the poshest part of Surrey. I nearly hit another Roller coming the other way, and its driver waved at me. Meanwhile, Keith was in the back playing records at top volume. I had to drive back too, at night in the dark. Scariest drive I've ever done. Keith befriended all the music writers and it was impossible not to like him. He was just so funny, so gregarious. Most of what he said was probably made up on the spot but what he said was so OTT that you had to quote him. He knew what made a good story, even if it was a pack of lies. Same with David Bowie really.

When Bowie told my *MM* colleague Michael Watts that he was gay, or maybe bisexual, no one pointed out that he was married with an infant son. After all, that would have spoilt the story.

***S!*:** Many people, but not *Shindig!* readers, have forgotten what an incendiary force Slade were. How did you feel about the dichotomy of their teenybopper glam singles and the Who-like power they could drum up live?

CC: I think Slade were unfairly classed as a "pop" act because of the way they dressed and their hit singles, and also the younger audience they attracted – but the truth was they could hold their own against anyone when it came to playing live. Noddy had a voice that matched anyone, and Jim Lea was as good a bass player (and guitarist, for that matter) as any of those that played in more progressive rock groups. They'd been together since the mid-60s, played hundreds, maybe even over a thousand, gigs and you can't beat that when it comes to knowing the ropes. When Slade first did *Top Of The Pops* they looked around at all these young groups, some of whom were formed on the back of a hit record written and produced by someone else, and laughed. "I knew we'd make it when we saw that lot," Jim told me.

***S!*:** Was 1971, as David Hepworth claims in the book of the same title, really "Rock's golden year"?

CC: In terms of record industry turnover, yes. Some of the best and best-selling LPs of the decade came out that year – *Tapestry* by Carole King, *Led Zep 4*, *Who's Next*, *Ziggy Stardust*, *Every Picture* by Rod, *Honky Chateau* by Elton, *Slade Alive* – loads of them. It was the start of the era when LPs sold as well as singles, but I think that '72 and '73 were just

"I remember thinking that Chris Hutchins, who wrote for *NME*, must have a great life as he seemed to spend all his time hanging out with The Beatles. It wasn't so much the quality of his writing that impressed me, just that he seemed to have a fabulous job"

as good. In fact, the whole of the first half of the '70s were just as good as that, and it just happened to coincide with my best years on *MM*!

***S!*:** You flew to New York for the first time in November 1971 for a party thrown by RCA to celebrate them signing The Kinks. America was the home of rock 'n' roll, and everything the average post-war Brit aspired to. Did it meet your expectations?
CC: Absolutely. Flying to the US was quite rare in those days, before the advent of Freddie Laker's cheap flights. It wasn't that unusual in the music business but none of my friends from where I grew up had ever been there, so it was super exciting just to get on the jumbo plane. I was so excited to be in New York, the cars, the skyscrapers, the noise, the streets and avenues, the accents, the food, everything was different from the UK, more vibrant somehow, a bit more reckless, a bit dangerous.

***S!*:** In 1973, along with the glam of the pop charts and the prog of *The Old Grey Whistle Test* were the 10th anniversary celebrations of The Beatles topping the *MM* chart and the steady flow of '50s American rock 'n' roll legends like Jerry Lee Lewis playing to tough Teddy Boys. After psych had led to prog and hair had become longer, flares wider, collars longer, and stacked heels higher, was there also a sense of nostalgia already creeping into rock?
CC: I think nostalgia has always been a part of the music/record industry, none more so than today when there are tribute bands to all and sundry. It's almost 70 years since Elvis released his first singles so the rock 'n' roll era has been around for a long time, much longer than the era of crooners that preceded it. Rock 'n' roll fans turned their back on the music their parents liked, but nowadays rock 'n' roll fans cut across all age groups. Rock 'n' roll demolished the generation gap that existed before it arrived.

***S!*:** Chateau Marmont, Rodney Bingenheimer, LA… was it fun as a young rock journalist? Did it feel to you like Americans trying to outdo us Brits with true American pomp or did they have something of their own? What were some of the wildest and craziest things you witnessed?
CC: It was incredible fun, from every angle. I was seeing three or four rock shows a week, for free. I was meeting rock stars big and small. I was given free records, as many as I wanted. I was flying here, there and everywhere to do this. I was mixing with interesting, free-minded, lively people. I was meeting loads of pretty girls, some of whom welcomed my attentions. In the US I was living on expenses and banking my unspent salary. What's not to like? I had some pretty wild adventures with Led Zeppelin, not least when their manager had to "steal" two limousines from the drivers in Greensboro, and The Who when I was sat next to Pete on a plane and had to cradle his head because he got a nosebleed.

***S!*:** Much of the pub-rock scene looked back to the fire and energy of the beat era or the country-rock and blues of a few years before. Where did you stand on that encroaching divide of authenticity and progression – Doctor Feelgood versus Steely Dan, for example?
CC: I liked them all, I was really impressed when I saw Dr Feelgood for the first time, at a show in France, but I loved Steely Dan too. In truth, there weren't many acts that I didn't like. I think I sort of straddled both camps in a way. I didn't much like disco music but that didn't mean I didn't write about it or interview disco artists. I wasn't that keen on jazz (though I am now) and didn't know much about it so I found someone who did and commissioned him to write jazz reviews. My job in the US was to cover everything, new and old, and not to let personal preferences influence what I wrote about. Every week I read *Billboard* and looked to see if there was someone new in the charts, and if there was, I'd be on the phone to their record company asking for an interview, no matter what style of music they played. It was all part of the job.

***S!*:** The '70s scene was beyond boozy and generally off its tits on a wide array of easily available drugs. Everyone was young and carefree and there was money to blow, but in hindsight have you ever thought about why those times were so crazy and excessive? Was it a reaction to the rationing and "make do and mend" era of recent history?
CC: The post-war generation – people like me – was throwing off the mentality of the generation that preceded it. This began in the '60, with The Beatles and Stones, new fashions, satire (*That Was The Week That Was*, Peter Cook etc), Profumo, kitchen sink dramas, the decline of religion, the birth control pill, recreational drugs, a general feeling that kowtowing to our "elders and betters" was no longer required because our "elders and betters" weren't role models any more. By the '70s this was more ingrained, and with full employment, the under 25s had money to spend on enjoying themselves. Drugs, though supposedly illegal, were readily available in New York. Loose joints were sold on the streets outside rock shows, and inside the smell of marijuana was noticeable. Then again, in some ways rock music – as opposed to Radio 1 chart pop – was a secret society. My dad had never heard of Led Zeppelin but they were selling millions of records. And for a few years, *MM* was the magazine of choice for that secret society.

***S!*:** What do you remember most about your time in NYC prior to and during the birth of punk? It was a dump, wasn't it? How did you acclimatise to it after the relative luxury of LA? This was a time when the city was bankrupt and dangerous yet there was a whole scene springing up around CBGBs and Max's.
CC: I always thought New York had the best of the best and the worst of the worst. I lived on East 78th, the Upper East side, which certainly wasn't a dump. It was a posh area. But if I chose to go 25 blocks north to Harlem it was a whole different matter, almost a different country, and further north, the Bronx, was even worse. The Lower East side was dodgy but the Lower West side wasn't. I was advised to watch my back in certain areas of downtown New York, like the Bowery where CBGBs was located and homeless people hung around. But I always dressed in jeans and t-shirts, so I might have looked like I was homeless myself, and I never carried much money around with me. I didn't look like I was worth mugging, and neither did any rock fans. Scenes that produce new music almost always spring up in low rent areas – The Cavern in Liverpool's Matthew Street was in a pretty dodgy area so it was no surprise the NY underground sprung up in somewhere cheap like the Bowery.

***S!*:** Your Stilettoes review was the first mention (and pic) of Debbie Harry – was there any indication she would become the biggest female star on the planet by the end of the decade?
CC: To be honest it was her looks that attracted me first. The Stilettoes were never going to be big but I thought that with the right material and band behind her Debbie would make it. When I first saw Blondie I thought they stood a good chance. They stood out from the other bands at CBGBs because they were out and out pop, or powerpop as it came to be known. Other bands there – like Talking Heads,

Faces Mac and Kenney being interviewed by Chris, LA, 1973

"In some ways rock music – as opposed to Radio 1 chart pop – was a secret society. My dad had never heard of Led Zeppelin but they were selling millions of records. And for a few years, *MM* was the magazine of choice for that secret society"

or Television – were experimenting more, while The Ramones were punk. Blondie were neither, just a pop band with a great looking singer in need of the right producer.

***S!*:** Between 1983 and 2016 you were the managing editor of Omnibus books. When did you notice that an interest in the recent history of rock and pop had become so important?
CC: That feeling was creeping up on me during the two years before I joined Omnibus – 1981 and '82. I wrote some books of my own during this time (Bowie, Who, Deep Purple, Slade) and there seemed to be a market for them. That market exploded during the next 10 years and I was fortunate to be in a position to exploit it. As far as a rock book publishing is concerned Omnibus was a big fish in a small pond but as far as book publishing in general was concerned Omnibus was a small fish in a big pond. Happily for me, it took the big publishers a long time to cotton on to the fact that there was a market for rock books beyond Elvis and The Beatles.

***S!*:** What has changed the most in the music industry (beyond the "real" rock stars, journalism, radio, formats) in recent years? How do you view its future?
CC: The monthly music magazines of today rely largely on nostalgia, but the weekly music press in my day was immediate, spontaneous, and opinionated. It stirred battles royal over content and musical direction, drug- and alcohol-induced recklessness and titanic egos that exploded in desperate power struggles. It was a vibrant, messy, unforgiving arena that gave voice to countless writers of note. Bought by millions and read by millions more, it no longer exists which is a tragedy for both aspiring writers and the music industry itself.

Even though I lost touch with the ups and downs of the fortunes of *NME* and *MM* during the '80s I continued to read them. I began to think that *NME* was becoming too political for its own good, losing its way amidst an editorial policy that promoted left-wing ideology over music. I agreed with the ideology – it was the Thatcher era after all – but felt music magazines should cover music and political magazines politics. Meanwhile, *MM* seemed desperate to outdo A&R men by finding the next big thing before they did, which was admirable enough but resulted in a few sub-par acts appearing on the front page and being hailed as saviours when they were anything but. Both papers tended to ignore the really popular acts, the ones that were selling out arenas, because they were insufficiently hip in the eyes of their staff, and this had a detrimental effect on their circulation, giving rise to monthly magazines that treated musicians on the wrong side of 30 with more respect, in some cases probably more than they deserved. All of this coincided with the CD era in which music became a soundtrack to a certain lifestyle in which the participants didn't care that much about the musicians whose user-friendly little silver discs they played as background music to dinner parties or in their cars and as a result weren't much interested in reading about them.

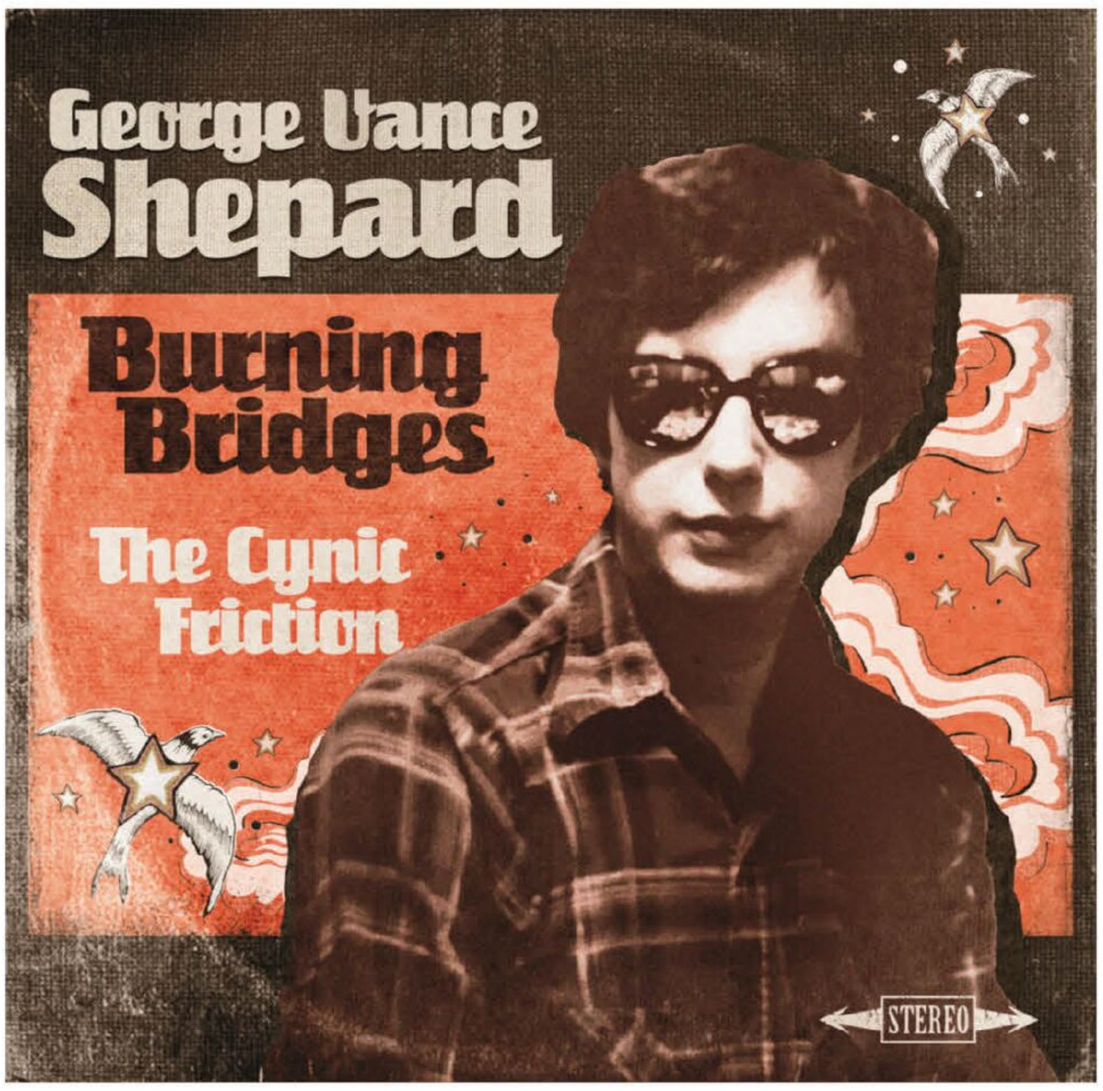
Then came the internet and streaming which has changed everything for the industry, but as far as music journalism is concerned, it's the curtailing of access that has ruined things as well. Back when I was on *MM* the acts of the day needed the music press as much as we needed them. As a result, they were open to our needs, invariably willing to welcome us into their midst whether or not they were promoting a new record or forthcoming tour. To my mind, this close relationship between musicians and journalists benefited both parties equally. No one vetted what questions were asked of interviewees and, for the most part, their answers were candid and honest. We saw the superstars at work, rest and play. Unlike today, when rock stars are insulated by several layers of retainers who keep the press at arm's length, access for us was virtually unlimited. We were all on the same side.

Now, that golden era of the weekly music press is a distant memory. As for myself, back in 1977, after seven years on *MM* I knew my time was up. When I turned 30 I thought I was too old to continue – which sounds ridiculous now – but I got out because I felt I couldn't sustain the required enthusiasm in my writing. I wanted to try something else in music, which I did. Many years passed until 2014 when I launched a music blog called Just Backdated at the suggestion of my daughter. A few years earlier, aged 19, she'd worn a rare Keith Moon t-shirt of mine to a party and was surrounded by boys her own age wanting to know where she got it. When she explained that her dad used to know him and that he had been associated with The Who professionally, she was pestered with questions about me to the point where she wished she'd never worn the damn t-shirt. When Olivia told me this I figured it was time to start a blog and when, with her encouragement, I did so I somehow rediscovered that same enthusiasm for writing about music and musicians that I had in the early '70s.

I don't think there's much future for rock journalism now. There are fewer print outlets and anyone can do it by starting their own blog. I was very lucky to have been a part of it at the time I was. S!

Just Backdated: Melody Maker – Seven Years In The Seventies is published by Spenwood

Cosmic Sunshine Records Presents:



After 40 years... the late George Vance Shepard's single Burning Bridges is reissued!

These recordings feature Eric Bergman (bass and engineering) of the cult psychedelic 60's group The Patron Saints.

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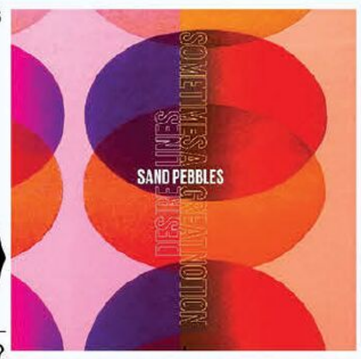
Fruits de Mer Records

psychedelia, krautrock, prog rock, acid folk - classic, long-lost and new

nick nicely 'MIKE HALL IS CALLING 7"

Psych maverick/genius, Nick is back on FdM, and he's in epic mood with 'Mike Hall Is Calling', including towering choruses and surreal twists...a psychedelic ghost story from the dead, or maybe the half-dead

'Brilliant' Nick Saloman
'Outstanding' Gideon Coe



The Sand Pebbles come from Australia; they met in 2001, when they were writers for the TV soap 'Neighbours' – just how Australian can you get? 'Notion' is a driving rock song that deserves to be heard on 7" of vinyl. It's the closest we'll ever get to a hit!

THE SAND PEBBLES 'SOMETIMES A GREAT NOTION' 7"

HANFORD FLYOVER 'GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS' 7"

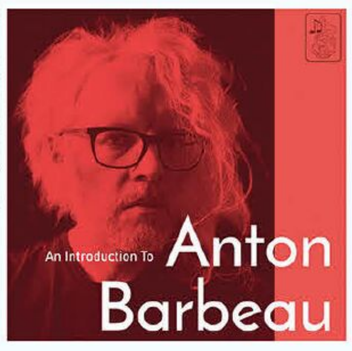
The first time Hanford Flyover have recorded covers and for this single they have taken on two classic US 60s psych tracks - 'Garden Of Earthly Delights' and 'You Can Never Come Down'.
Fans of the United States of America /Joe Byrd and the Field Hippies must not miss this.

A regular visitor to the Fruits de Mer label, Ant has roped in Barry 'The Fish' Melton (original lead guitarist with Country Joe McDonald and the Fish) to play searing lead guitar on 'Dogstar'; Ant backs it with a new take on the Robyn Hitchcock

ANTON BARBEAU 'DOGSTAR' 7"

AN INTRODUCTION TO ANTON BARBEAU CD

A retrospective of Ant's many contributions to Fruits de Mer, featuring covers of songs originally recorded by Julian Cope, David Bowie, Big Star, Traffic, Robyn Hitchcock, Donovan and The Monkees, together with his own compositions, including his classic 'Heavy Psychedelic Toilet' and 'Cellar Bar'- Ant's tribute to Cardigan's home to our summer festival.



PINHDAR 'A SPARKLE ON THE DARK WATER' LP + CD

Stunning new downtempo/ dreampop album from Italy.
"the duo's distinctive brand, given by trip-hop beats and dreamy textures of dream-pop, unfolds itself in a more dense and evolved sound. Cecilia's passionate voices are surrounded by Max's enveloping pyramid of synths and guitars, along with fiery soundscapes"
Kris Needs

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HONEY POT with CRYSTAL JACQUELINE CD

A collection of tracks Icarus Peel and Crystal Jacqueline have recorded for us over the years - a combination of covers and original songs plus new recordings available here for the first time, including The Kinks' 'Shangri-La' and a storming live version of 'White Rabbit', recorded in 2022 at the Half Moon in Putney.

CUSTARD FLUX 'EINSTEINIUM DELIRIUM' LP + CD

The latest album from The Luck Of Eden Hall's leader Gregory Curvey and his new band Custard Flux, and - this-their fifth release - is full-on electric. The band will be touring in England this summer, including playing sets at Kozfest, the Half Moon and our own 20th Dream of Dr. Sardonicus festival in Wales.

www.fruitsdemerrecords.com

Crying In The Sunshine

Queen of Queens. Margo Guryan, photographed for the cover of *Take A Picture*, 1968

A classically trained pianist and hip jazz aficionado, **MARGO GURYAN** is nevertheless deified for her lone 1968 album *Take A Picture*, the sublime masterpiece written and recorded after her latter-day conversion to the joys of pop music. **ANDY MORTEN** spends Sunday morning with a new box set chronicling Margo's musical pictures. Portrait by **JOEL BRODSKY**

Born in 1937 to Evelyn and Seymour in affluent suburban Queens, NY, Margo Guryan's childhood was filled with the sound of music. Her mother Evelyn studied piano before going out and becoming the breadwinner – father Seymour stayed at home and played Tin Pan Alley standards on the family piano. "He surely loved music and was an enormous influence on me," Margo told It's Psychedelic, Baby in 2018. By the age of six, Margo had begun playing under the auspices of her father. She later claimed, "I was against it… my parents forced me into studying."

Enrolling at Boston University in 1955, Margo fell under the spell of modern jazz, studying composition and jazz history, luxuriating in the sound of her fellow students. She became so immersed in improvisation and the work of pianists like Ahmad Jamal, Bill Evans, Thelonious Monk and Horace Silver that she barely noticed Elvis and The Beatles. An encounter with Storyville club/label owner George Wein led to an impromptu public performance, something that clearly spooked the 20-year-old Margo, who would seldom return to the spotlight, despite headliner Miles Davis offering a quiet "Yeah, baby" after her set.

Paths eventually led to Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler's office at Atlantic Records, home of Coltrane, Mingus, Coleman and The Modern Jazz Quartet, where Margo impressed, and was signed as both songwriter and artist. A demo session took place, later derided by Margo as "a total disaster… the more they told me to sing out, the worse it got". The seven songs captured that day make their first public appearance on *Words & Music*, Numero Group's freshly released treasure trove of Margo's music, and show a nervous yet individual voice struggling to find its way.

Nevertheless, Margo remained close to Ertegun's brother Nesuhi, who placed 'Moon Ride' with jazz vocal star Chris Connor. Released on Atlantic in June '58, it became Margo's first recorded song. The following summer, Margo attended the ground-breaking but short-lived Lenox School Of Jazz in Massachusetts. As one of just two women in that year's intake, Margo was subject to the patronising patriarchal attitudes of the day, yet adored what Sonny Rollins described as Lenox's "sense of scholarship and dignity". As a pretty and well-schooled young woman, she unsurprisingly became the object of desire for many students and teachers.

Following her term at Lenox, Margo worked as secretary for Creed Taylor, then in the process of setting up the Impulse! label. Her former teacher and bebop drummer Max Roach requested that Margo pen the notes for his *Percussion Bitter Sweet* album in '61. She signed with prestigious publishing company MJQ Music as a lyricist (The MJQ was band in residence during Margo's time at Lenox), whereupon her adaptation of Ornette Coleman's 'Lonely Woman' would be cut by Chris Connor and Freda Payne among others. She spent the $1,500 earned from sales of Harry Belafonte's recording of 'I'm On My Way To Saturday' on a luxurious winter coat.

Margo at high school, mid-50s; her Lenox School Of Jazz ID card; Margo with David Baker, JR Monterose and David Young at Lenox, 1960

Margo married trombonist and former Lenox staffer Bob Brookmeyer in '64, the couple moving to Greenwich Village while he worked with giants like Gerry Mulligan, Herbie Hancock, Elvin Jones and Stan Getz. Despite an obvious rapport and plenty of mutual musical respect, Margo and Bob were at odds when it came to boundaries – Brookmeyer had quit Lenox over his distaste at its embrace of Ornette Coleman, while Margo was simultaneously writing words for Coleman's work. The marriage lasted two years.

This period of comparative domesticity saw Margo's songs buried on albums by her old friend Nancy Harrow, Dizzy Gillespie and Anita O'Day – prestigious artists all – but she was broke, approaching 30 and, as the old adage goes, the times they were a-changin'.

Having spent the best part of 10 years in the jazz world – with all its caveats and codes of authenticity – Margo must have been sceptical when her friend and storied pianist Dave Frishberg turned up extolling the virtues of The Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds*. "Pop music was looked upon as a desecration," Margo told *Shindig!* in 2009, "and never, never listened to. I missed the beginnings of the tidal changes in pop that were occurring." The album – in particular, its centrepiece 'God Only Knows – floored her. "It was like a composition lesson I had missed in class!" Awe-struck, she dashed out to buy the album. "I listened to all the songs, but returned to 'God Only Knows', which I played over and over again. Then I turned off the record player, sat down at my Wurlitzer, and wrote 'Think Of Rain'."

Her Damascene conversion in full flow, Margo began listening to pop radio and was astounded by what she heard. "I thought what was happening in pop music was more innovative than what was happening in jazz," she stated. The songs came quickly. Upon hearing them, Creed Taylor pointed Margo towards David Rosner, the head of Columbia Records' publishing wing April-Blackwood. "David suggested an arrangement was needed. I worked with my Webcor sound-on-sound tape recorder. The only problem was getting a proper vocal. It was David's suggestion that the [studio] engineer try doubling my voice and, lo and behold, it worked! All my subsequent demos were done this way." Doubled though that voice may be, it remains gossamer-light, closer in tone to those of Blossom Dearie and Astrud Gilberto than female stars and future interpreters Cass Elliot and Jackie DeShannon.

'Sunday Morning', the song for which Margo remains best-known, was transformed into a US Top 30 hit by Spanky & Our Gang in early '68 after she hand-delivered an acetate of it to their rehearsal space. Margo reciprocated by writing and recording the song 'Spanky & Our Gang', which became her first solo single on Bell Records off-shoot Mala in March, paired with her own recording of 'Sunday Morning'. (For two and a half minutes of unadulterated joy, we point you towards the 'Spanky' promo clip on YouTube.)

Rosner quickly realised that Margo's demos were of such quality as to be almost worthy of release (as proved by their appearances on many subsequent compilations), yet when he floated the idea of Margo recording her own songs, and she reluctantly agreed, the pair opted to cut fresh versions with a full band that included drummer Bernard Purdie and guitarist Hugh McCracken in Columbia's Studio B in Manhattan. Rosner brought in John Simon, fresh from working miracles on Simon & Garfunkel's *Bookends* and The Band and Blood, Sweat & Tears' debuts. The team completed one song, 'Don't Go Away', before Simon was airlifted into sessions for Big Brother & The Holding Company's *Cheap Thrills*, leaving rookie producer John Hill to take the reins. "Margo wrote the songs; my job was to make them sounds as good as possible," Hill said, "That was about it."

Hill's no-nonsense approach to getting the most from the players, combined with his comparative inexperience and fondness for The Beatles' forays into studio-bound psychedelia, became crucial ingredients in the sound of *Take A Picture* – and "Margo's jazz sensibility and her perfectionism," he adds. "I think she would've liked to be a different kind of singer, but she wasn't. It was not only fine, it was perfect."

Margo's songs continued to mine personal and universal themes: heart-breaking candour on one song, wistful nostalgia on the next, with constant allusions to sun and rain, happy and sad, laughter and tears.

Take A Picture was released on Bell in October, initial copies bearing the title *Words And Music* on the labels. The original cover concept of using one photo for each song was junked, leaving Margo staring through a distorting window pane (the 'Think Of Rain' image) on both front and back. "Shooting those photos was great fun," Margo told *Shindig!* "Joel Brodsky was the photographer. We took some in my apartment. 'Sunday Morning' with the coffee cup, crossword puzzle and John Hill handing me a cigarette. Everyone thought it looked like he was passing me a joint! Joel arranged the photos on a board and photographed that [but] we ran out of time. The folks at Bell asked me to choose one photo." The original collage was used for Beatball's expanded 2009 reissue.

Margo with Ron Brown, Max Roach and Kent McGarrity at Lenox, 1959; April-Blackwood promo photo, circa '66; an unused *Take A Picture* cover shot; the album and proceeding 'Spanky & Our Gang' 45

"I thought what was happening in pop music was more innovative than what was happening in jazz"

Reviews were few and far between, and sales modest. Margo insisted that she wouldn't undertake any live engagements to promote the album. "For someone who doesn't much like being told what to do," Margo explained, "the thought was a bit numbing." Bell extracted the title track as a single, then buried the album. It was appearing in cut-out racks within a year. Copies now routinely change hands for hundreds of pounds; there's a copy of the *Words And Music* pressing currently on discogs for £2,000.

A second album was never even mentioned. Margo and Rosner married in '70 and moved to LA, where the couple produced 'God Only Knows' benefactor Dave Frishberg's album *Oklahoma Toad*. Rosner's publishing career went into overdrive when he began working with Elton John on his first US visit. Margo continued to write and record sporadically.

Take A Picture would go on to enjoy a miraculous rebirth around the turn of the millennium as a small cadre of fans and collectors began extolling its virtues. In the late '90s, Jonathan Rosner, working for his dad's publishing company, received a mysterious cheque from Japan for thousands of dollars. "It had obviously sold some copies," he puzzled, "but it wasn't out." A bootleg CD of the album had shifted enormous quantities and watertight Japanese music law ensured that the pressing plant and the rights society had to pay someone. "I didn't care that we wouldn't be paid," Margo quipped. "I finally had a CD!" Around a dozen further editions – some containing Margo's contemporary demos as bonus tracks – have appeared around the world since.

While numerous off-centre albums that were made during the white heat of the late '60s and promptly consigned to the discount bins have become covetable cult artefacts, *Take A Picture* occupies a singular spot, its influence audible in a lineage of soft-hearted artists from Galaxie 500 and Belle & Sebastian to Melody's Echo Chamber and Clairo, the latter reportedly contributing to a forthcoming tribute album. Margo's '68 recording of 'Why Do I Cry' went viral on TikTok in 2021, the year she passed away. She'd doubtless have loved to see her work being passed onto youngsters, each of them, in their own way, taking a picture. S!

Words & Music is out now on Numero Group

Lonely Women

Six gems from the **Margo Guryan** songbook

Claudine Longet
I Don't Intend To Spend Christmas Without You
(A&M, December 1967)
Paris-born, LA-raised singer/actress Longet's heavily accented whisper was the perfect conduit for Margo's fragile songs. This unseasonably summery Christmas song failed to chart, but Longet also cut 'Think Of Rain' for October 1967's *The Look Of Love*. Margo's fully formed demo of 'I Don't Intend...' finally emerged on 2001 set *25 Demos* and reappears on *Words & Music*.

Carmen McRae
Don't Go Away
(from *The Sound Of Silence*, Atlantic, 1968)
One of *Take A Picture*'s most angular, tempo-twisting selections, 'Don't Go Away' was ripe for reinterpretation in a jazz style. Ground-breaking song stylist McRae was 15 years and 30-odd albums into influential career when she cut it for 1968's pop crossover album *The Sound Of Silence*, which also contains her reading of Margo's 'Can You Tell'. See *25 Demos* for Margo's demo.

Rita Moss
Come To Me Slowly
(from *Just A Dream Ago*, Dot, 1968)
Margo cut a demo of 'Come To Me Slowly' during preparations for *Take A Picture* but the song was passed over for inclusion. Instead, jazz voice Rita Moss (then 50 years old) cut a typically impassioned take for this 1968 album that also includes her landmark recording of Puccini adaptation 'Just A Dream Ago' and 'Sleep Safe And Warm' from *Rosemary's Baby*. Margo's demo appears on *Words & Music*.

Helen Merrill & Dick Katz
Lonely Woman
(from *A Shade Of Difference*, Milestone, 1969)
'Sunday Morning' may remain Margo's best-known song but her most recorded may be 'Lonely Woman', the 1959 Ornette Coleman piece to which she added dark, desolate lyrics, and was published by MJQ Music in '62. Chris Connor and Freda Payne cut versions, before jazz pianist (and Margo's former squeeze) Dick Katz cut a deep, modal version with Helen Merrill for the pair's '69 collaboration. Margo's demo has yet to surface.

Astrud Gilberto
Think Of Rain
(from *September 17, 1969*, Verve, 1970)
The song that kick-started Margo's second wind proved immediately popular, with Claudine Longet, Jackie DeShannon and choral sunshine-pop act The Split Level releasing versions. Brazilian star Astrud Gilberto, whose gossamer-light vocal style recall Margo's own, included a lush reading on her pop-leaning 1970 Verve swansong. Margo's demo was sweetened for inclusion on *Take A Picture*.

Cass Elliott
I Think A Lot About You
(from *Don't Call Me Mama Anymore*, RCA, 1973)
Margo professed a fondness for The Mama's & The Papa's after her pop conversion in 1966, so it must have been a dream come true when Cass included a sassy take of Margo's '72 composition 'I Think A Lot About You', captured live in full cabaret mode at Mister Kelly's night club in Chicago, on her final album. Margo's demo appears on *Words & Music*.

Andy Morten

"I didn't have a lot of faith in a comeback." Q65, 1971 model. Clockwise from left: Joop Roelofs, Peter Vink, Beer Klaasse, Frank Nuijens, Wim Bieler (middle)

A Change Of Scene

In the concluding part of our definitive Q65 history, MIKE STAX considers the cult Dutch masters' revival, survival and eventual demise, taking in a new approach, a masterful solo record, and a lifetime of comebacks

In 1966, Q65 took the Netherlands by storm, breaching the charts with a fusillade of thrilling singles, including 'You're The Victor', 'The Life I Live' and 'World Of Birds', and an audaciously innovative album, *Revolution*. But by the end of '67 the band had shattered into fragments. Charismatic lead singer Willem Bieler was snatched away for compulsory military service, while drummer and chief lyricist Jay Baar was jailed for hashish possession. In '68, after Baar's release, he and his former Q65 bandmates Frank Nuijens and Joop Roelofs, regrouped as Circus along with keyboardist Marco Klein. They wrote and recorded several tracks for Phonogram, but nothing was released at the time, and after just a handful of coolly received live performances, they pulled the plug. People didn't want Circus, they wanted Q65. By '69 Circus had already been forgotten, but in the burgeoning underground scene in the Netherlands the name Q65 was still legend.

Phonogram (the parent company of Decca in the Netherlands) was well aware of the situation. Realising that the Q65 name still had market value, the label continued to tap into their catalogue, which now included a handful of unused tracks from the aborted Circus project. Apparently, it was suggested at one of Phonogram's fortnightly board meetings that it might be advantageous to revisit those tapes and release them under the market-proven Q65 brand.

The waters were tested first with a "new" single in June 1969. Although credited to Q65, the A-side, 'Sundance', was actually a Circus recording, while the B-side was Q65's '67 hit 'World Of Birds'. Although the single didn't chart, sales were sufficient that the label decided to proceed with a full album release.

In August '69, Q65's *Revival* album was issued, comprising one side of previously released tracks by the original '66-67 band, and a second side of recordings from the Circus sessions. As several of the Circus tracks had not been completed during the original sessions, there was some additional work done to them in one or more overdub and remixing sessions in April '69. Wim Bieler was brought in to sing the lead vocal on 'Fairytales Of Truth', and producer Hans van Hemert recorded a new lead vocal for 'Voluntary Peacemaker', replacing the original vocal track, which had been sung by Frank Nuijens. Significantly, there was no mention of Circus on the album cover. Session information on the back cover instead listed those songs as new Q65 recordings dated 1st April '69. Furthermore, original Q member Peter Vink was credited as bass player on three of the four tracks (and percussion player on the other). "I don't play on the Circus tracks," confirms Peter, who at the time was playing with new band Big Wheel. The implication was that Q65 had reunited – which they hadn't. Not yet anyway.

But with the addition of Bieler's lead vocal, 'Fairytales Of Truth' was transformed from an unfinished Circus song into an authentic Q65 number. It's an excellent, atmospheric psychedelic piece with a hypnotic bass line, played by Roelofs, and an inspired blend of guitar, piano and Mellotron, the latter played by Paul Natte, soon to become a successful composer and arranger. And even without the presence of Bieler or Vink, 'Ridin' On A Slow Train' is pure Q65 – although it had been intended as an epitaph to the band, or at least a world-weary farewell: "Waving goodbye to the one I've been /

Out in the woods for the *Afghanistan* cover shoot; 1969 stop-gap LP *Revival*; '71's *Afghanistan*

Guess it's time for a change of scene." Jay Baar sings his own lyrics in a raw-edged empathetic style ("See my friend, he's smiling / See his eyes, he's also dying") and plays drums brilliantly, while the unique Nuijens/Roelofs guitar chemistry is as potent as it had ever been – Joop providing the shimmering tremolo part and Frank the slicing rhythm part and lyrical leads.

Revival may have been premature in signalling a Q65 reunion, but it planted the seeds that would bear new fruit just a few months later.

By the autumn, Wim Bieler's military service had ended, and Q65 decided to get back together. There was one line-up change, however: Jay Baar was now playing with Boudewijn de Groot's new group, The Tower, so Beer Klaasse of Group 1850 took over on drums. "In '68 Frank played bass guitar with Group 1850 for several months [replacing bass player Ruud van Buuren who had a stomach ulcer], so I knew him well," Klaasse explains. "In the fall of '69, I was making fringed clothes and Frank helped me with that. One evening in October he said, 'The Q is going to start again, and Jay is busy with Boudewijn de Groot and does not want to come back. Do you want to join us?' In November '69 I went to practice with them in the Marathon in The Hague."

Playing with Q65 was a lot different than Klaasse expected. "After more than three years of incredible fun and crazy music [with Group 1850] I joined a band that had a reputation as a very rough group," he remembered, "but the practice was completely different. The singer only wanted to go home to his wife! I had little contact with him. But with both Joop and Frank I had a good relationship – the same age and the same humour. Peter and I had different ideas about music from time to time, but we still got along well."

In December '69, the Discofoon label (part of the V&D department store company) offered Q65 an album deal, figuring they could repeat the success they'd had with the Group 1850 album *Paradise Now*. But in February '70 Q65 opted to sign with Negram, who came through with a better deal. The first single by the new line-up was released in March, pairing the fine, atmospheric ballad 'Don't Let Me Fall' with an archetypal Q rocker, 'Crumblin''. The magnificent 'Crumblin'' (by which Bieler actually meant 'Grumblin'') was aimed at Nuijens, who had misgivings about the reunion – "Stop being grumpy, try to be optimistic, just like we are." "I didn't have a lot of faith in a comeback," confesses Frank. "The gigs were good, but I personally missed the vibe. Besides the fact that Beer Klaasse was a great drummer, I still missed the ideas/sound of Jay Baar; he had an important role in writing our music."

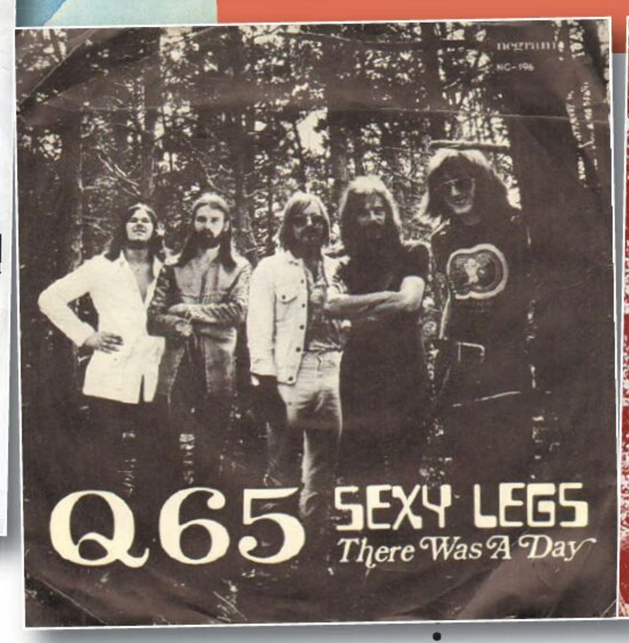
But Bieler wanted to make a completely fresh start. In the new Q65 he insisted they not play any of their old material, something that did not please audiences, who wanted to hear 'The Life I Live' and 'You're The Victor'. "Everywhere we performed, the audience had certain musical expectations," remembered Beer, "but in fact we were a different band. The result was that we could perform almost every day in the first few months, but we were never asked to come back."

The band pressed ahead and continued to come up with strong new material.

Unlikely pop paper heart-throbs, 1970; '70-71 singles

"Everywhere we performed, the audience had certain musical expectations, but in fact we were a different band. The result was that we could perform almost every day in the first few months, but we were never asked to come back"

BEER KLAASSE



Another fine single followed in September '70, pairing the tough, bluesy rocker 'Sexy Legs', written by Willem, Frank and Peter, with the melodic, folksy 'There Was A Day' by Willem and Joop.

A new album was next. *Afghanistan* was released in mid-November '70. Side One presented an impressive selection of new studio recordings, including 'Baby Don't Worry', which drifts artfully between thuggish blues riffing and dreamier psychedelic sections, the heavy-blues rocker 'I'm Glad', and 'Night', an eerie country-flavoured lament with some inventive guitar interplay from Roelofs and Nuijens. Bieler's simplistic lyrics may not be as inspired as the departed Jay Baar's work, but his vocals are as strong as ever. Co-written by Bieler and Nuijens, 'We Are Happy' is another standout track, switching gears from an old-fashioned rockaboogie into an ebullient acoustic guitar-led singalong in which the band members are joined by some of their spouses – Hanny Bieler, Josette Nuijens and Nel Vink – along with Golden Earring members Rinus Gerritsen on organ and Barry Hay on flute.

The group didn't have enough new material for an entire album, so Side Two was taken up by 'Rock 'n' Roll Medley', an extended blitz through some classic '50s rockers recorded live at a club on the island of Texel. "Texel itself is a special story," Beer explains. "The venue was called Sarasani and was known by all groups for the crazy atmosphere. The last ferry to the mainland left at about 11 o'clock in the evening, so you had to stay there. They had a special place with very dirty mattresses, near the entrance, where you could hear everything that happened. There was a hashish dealer sitting at the entrance who repeated the same thing all night: "Afghanistan! Very good Afghanistan!" We found that very appropriate at that time and we used it as the title for the record."

On 31st October – a couple of weeks before the release of *Afghanistan* – Frank Nuijens was badly injured while playing football. His leg was fractured in two places, and it had to be put into plaster up to his groin. Frank was laid up in hospital until the week before Christmas, which gave him a lot of down time to reflect about his plans for the future. He wasn't happy in Q65 anymore and wanted to go in a different direction musically. About a week before he was released from the hospital, Frank called Joop and told him he was going to leave the band. Before leaving though, he participated in recording sessions in late December and early January, the results of which would appear on the next two Q65 singles.

The first was 'Love Is Such A Good Thing, a catchy number based around a *Peter Gunn*-type riff, released in February '71, with 'Night' on its B-side. A month later another single appeared: 'I Just Can't Wait' – about the impending birth of Bieler's first child – backed with the blazing, thuggish rocker 'We're Gonna Make It'. By then Frank had left, having played a couple of final gigs with them in January and February.

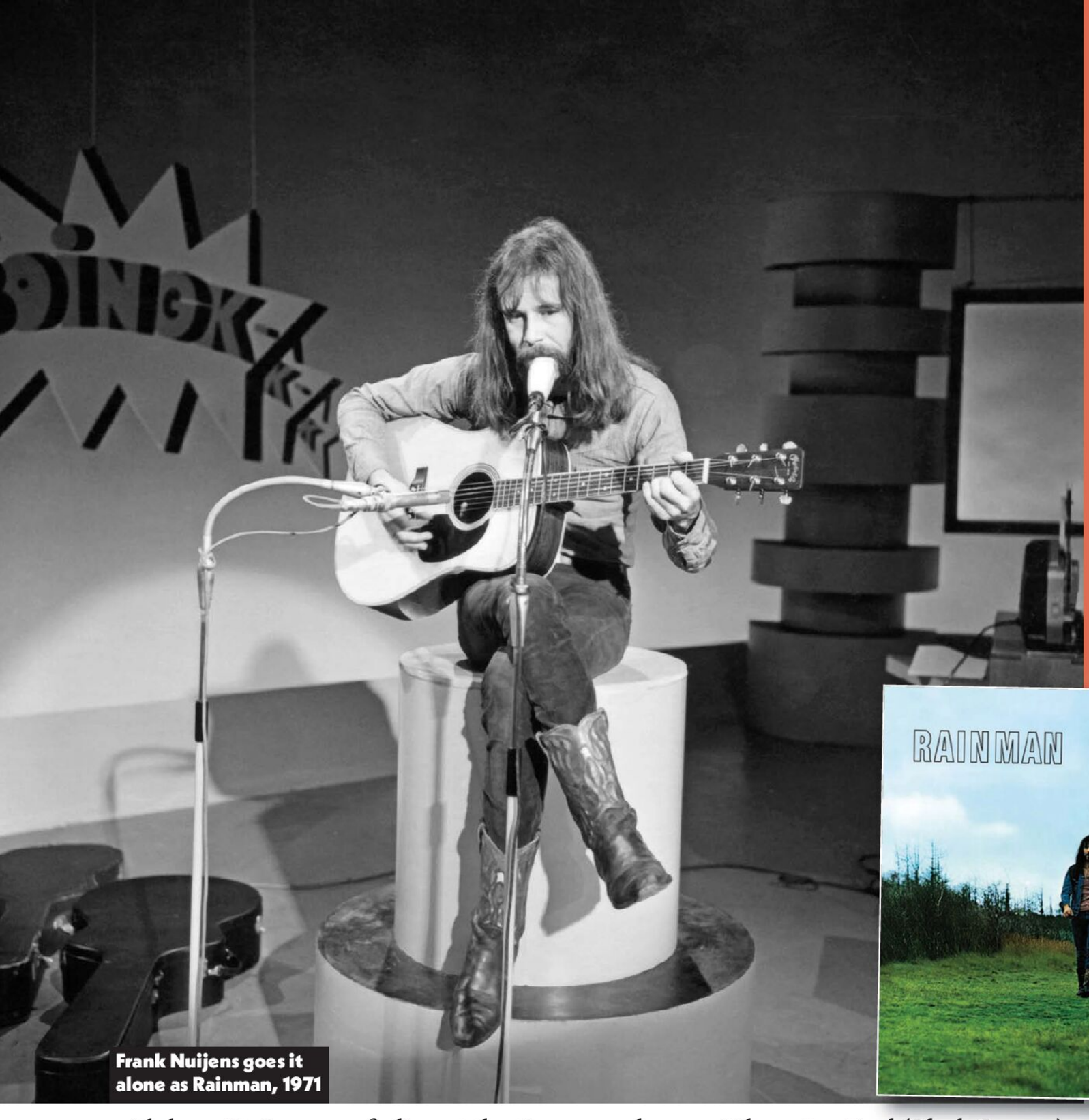
While recuperating from his broken leg, Frank had contemplated the idea of recording a solo album, drawing on some of his song ideas that hadn't been a good fit for Q65. After a few months rest, he proposed the idea to Negram and they gave him the go-ahead. The project reunited him with Jay Baar, who wrote lyrics for most of the songs.

After another incarceration for hash possession in September '68, Jay had travelled through Europe and for a short period joined The Living Theatre. After returning to Holland in late '68, he connected with Boudewijn de Groot in The Tower to record the single 'In Your Life' backed with 'Slow Motion Mind', a Top 40 hit in January '69. After leaving The Tower, he worked briefly with Ahora Mazda and The Selfkick. Baar also toured Europe with the Amsterdam-based theatre group La Mama. By the time he reunited with Frank in early '71 Jay was with the group Tantalus. He played drums on their first and only single, 'Money Man' / 'Her Room' (released on Negram in September '71) and co-wrote the A-side.

Two members of Tantalus, Francois Content and Piet Kuyters, helped out with the sessions for Frank's album. Other guest musicians included Eelco Gelling and Herman Deinum of Cuby + Blizzards, and Dick Beekman (C+B, The Ro-d-ys, Livin' Blues). Nuijens co-produced the album with Beekman. It was recorded between April and June of '71 at Bovema and GTB Studios in The Hague. "The atmosphere was very relaxed, due to the amount of cannabis," remembers Frank. "The quality of the cannabis was great in those days!"

The relaxed, hazy mood of the sessions is reflected in the music, an enthralling set of laidback mesmeric folk-rock, enhanced by some inspired psychedelic guitar. With the exception of a heartfelt cover of Tim Hardin's 'Don't Make Promises', all the songs were composed by Nuijens and Baar.

The languid title track has a bleak, world weary mood that synced up well



Frank Nuijens goes it alone as Rainman, 1971

"I decided not to use my own name because I didn't want the album to be linked to Q65. Rainman was my own personal project, which had nothing to do with the Q"
FRANK NUIJENS

with how Nuijens was feeling at the time: "Rainman / Please wash the dust from my eyes / I'm so tired of being alone / I'm so cold I'm frozen to the bone." Among the other highlights, 'The Natural Man' is an uplifting, melodic number with utopian lyrics. Francois Content's flute plays a key role, musically and thematically. It's about as far away from Q as the album gets. There's no way to imagine Willem Bieler singing this song, but Frank handles it beautifully. 'Don't' is a completely acoustic number with Eelco Gelling playing some lovely Spanish-style leads over Frank's fingerpicking, and Nuijens harmonising with his own voice, as he does throughout the album. 'You Will Be Freed By Me' is a beautifully rendered love song, while 'Money Means Nothing At All' is a reflective acoustic number with some excellent, fluid bass playing by Enno Velthuis and a characteristically lyrical guitar solo from Frank. As was often the case, Baar's lyrics were firmly rooted in real life –street life – the subject of the song is the same woman described in Q65's 'World Of Birds'.

Best of all, though, is 'Get You To Come Through', a dream-like psychedelic piece with a yearning melody, dynamic time changes, and a thrilling guitar solo. It's a song about self-doubt and the seeming impossibility of reaching one's dreams – "Who has turned and changed my destiny? / I know what I'm supposed to be / But it seems so hard to score." "'Get You To Come Through' is a song where Jay already had written the lyrics," remembers Frank, "I came up with the melodies and chords. I played the guitar solo on a Gibson Les Paul (Black Beauty) and it fits perfectly." Truth be told, everything about this song is perfect.

Negram released the album along with the non-LP single 'The Bird' in November '71; it was billed not as Frank Nuijens but as Rainman. "I decided not to use my own name because I didn't want the album to be linked to Q65," explains Frank. "Rainman was my own personal project, which had nothing to do with the Q. The picture with the dead trees in the back was shot in the dunes at the coast of the North Sea close to my hometown The Hague. It was my favourite spot for a long walk."

Despite a TV appearance and a couple of live shows, *Rainman* did not sell particularly well, and Frank wasn't sufficiently motivated to continue with any kind of solo career. Committing those songs to tape was where his ambition ended. *Rainman* stands as some of his most impressive work.

Meanwhile, Q65 had broken all ties with Negram and in early May '71 signed with Polydor. However, that didn't stop Negram from releasing another Q65 album in August '71. *We're Gonna Make It* was basically a collection of singles and leftovers, and even included four repeats from *Afghanistan*. "*We're NOT Gonna Make It* would've been a better title!" Joop later joked.

Q65's first single for Polydor, 'Fighting Is Easy' / 'Country Girl', was released in July '71. During this period, Bieler was becoming increasingly argumentative and unreliable. Things came to a head when he backed out of a well-paying gig in Germany, and he was fired. His replacement was Johnny Frederiksz, who'd previously been the lead singer for the group George Cash. Changing their name to Kjoe, they released one more single for Polydor, 'Hoonana' / 'Troubles' in May '72. They played a number of gigs between June and November of '72, and made a slapstick film recording for the TV program *Popzien*. In '73 when live gigs started drying up, the band splintered, with Vink and Klaasse going on to form the successful progressive rock band Finch with guitarist Joop van Nimwegen.

In a sign of the changing times, after Kjoe disbanded, Joop Roelofs worked as a deejay at the Hans en Grietje discotheque in Scheveningen, starting in May '73. In '74 Frank Nuijens also worked there as a deejay along with Nicko Christiansen (real name Nico Jansen) of Livin' Blues.

Meanwhile, after his ejection from Q65, Wim Bieler had a brief solo fling, including a '74 single with Dambuster, 'Lady Of Love' (with Q65's 'Fighting Is Easy' on the B-side). The rest of the decade appears to have been musically uneventful for Bieler. In late '77 he resurfaced with new "hard-rock/blues" band Nytro, but they only made one live performance, on 2nd November '77 at Hans en Grietje.

On 13th June, '80, the original line-up of Q65 reformed for one performance at the Haagse Beatnach, a large concert event showcasing '60s-era bands from The Hague, including Shocking Blue, Sandy Coast, Livin' Blues and The Golden Haigs (with original members of Golden Earrings and The Haigs). It would be the last time the group played with Jay Baar.

Encouraged by the response they'd received at the Beatnach, and the attendant media attention, the band decided to continue, but without the involvement of Frank or Jay. Joop van Nimwegen came in on lead guitar, and

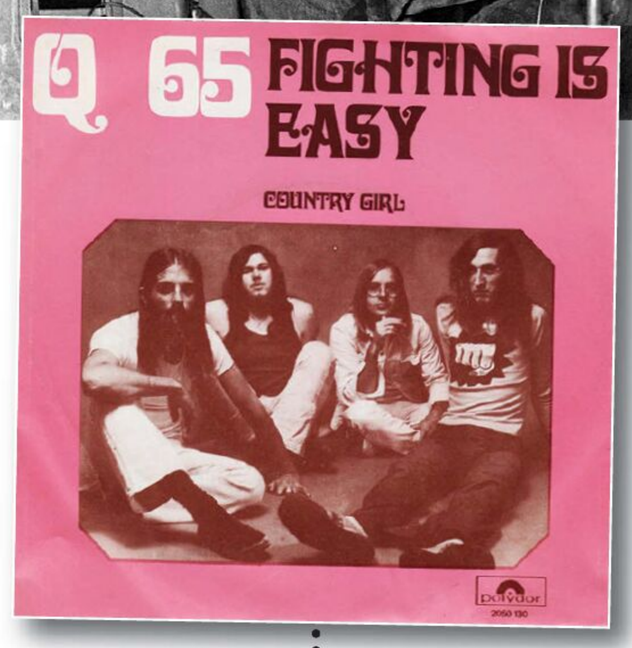
Peter Vink and Wim Bieler at Pop-Gala 1971; the same year's odds-and-ends LP *We're Not Gonna Make It*; 'Fighting Is Easy' 45

Fred van Vloten took over on drums, both had previously played with Vink in Finch. This line-up played well-received shows through '81 before calling it quits. They resumed playing again in '84 with Beer Klaasse back on drums, a reunion that lasted until '87 at which point the Finch contingent had had enough. The following year the band reconfigured with Bieler bringing in three younger musicians: Rinus Hollenberg on guitar, René Van Spanje on keyboards, Rick Finck on bass, and Rob Louwers on drums. Aside from Bieler, Joop Roelofs was the only other original member. With this line-up they made a new single, 'Let's Roll' / 'Are You Home', released on the Jaws label in September '88. Joop's involvement during this period was increasingly reluctant, and in '90 the band folded again.

On 7th November '90, Jay Baar was found dead on his Amsterdam houseboat. It was a lonely end for the man whose creative lyrics and skilful drumming had helped define the very essence of Q65. Frank Nuijens was living in Greece at the time, so he didn't get the news until later. Wim Bieler was the only member of Q to attend the funeral. "I remember that after the death of Jay Baar he was very shocked," says Bieler's youngest son, Jim. "At his funeral almost no one was there, and people put him down as a junkie in the media, which was a bit nasty to do. Jay was a quiet but peaceful man, and Willem was fond of him."

Q65 was dormant for the next seven years. In '97 the four surviving members of the original group were filmed for the *Classic Albums* documentary series, which aired on the Dutch TV network NCRV. Peter Vink was not on speaking terms with the others at the time, so he was filmed separately, but the documentary brought Willem, Joop and Frank back together to talk about the album – along with producer Hans van Hemert and engineer Jan Audier – and play some songs together acoustically. The chemistry was so good that they reassembled later that year to record an album with mostly acoustic versions of older material along with a handful of new numbers. The CD, titled *Trinity*, was released in November '97 on Bieler's Mohican label. The acoustic trio, along with Eric van den Berk on keyboards, played a few gigs to promote the CD. During 1998 Wim and Frank decided they wanted to continue, but Joop declined to participate so they put together a new line-up without him. However, Joop returned for one more Q65 session, playing acoustic guitar on the band's final original composition, 'Passion Kills The Time.' The song would remain unreleased until the release of definitive Q65 box set *The Life We Live* this year.

Bieler and Nuijens continued as Q65, playing live shows through '99 and into 2000 with a line-up that included Hans Waterman on drums, who they'd known since the early days when he'd been with Cuby + Blizzards. "The line-up in which I participated only was in action for one year," remembers Hans. "The few gigs we did were very convincing, very promising in every way. Great working atmosphere. Then, in the year 2000, hell broke loose when Willem died unexpectedly in the waiting room of his doctor. He'd had a bad heart condition already for a couple of years."



Willem died of cardiac arrest on 21st November 2000. According to his second wife Twanny, he was happy with what he'd accomplished through the years with Q65. "He was proud," she confirms. "But every now and then he wished he could live without Q65. It was his biggest and baddest love – and his end…"

Joop Roelofs passed away on 2nd October 2018 after a prolonged battle with cancer. He faced off death with the same irreverence and humour he'd lived his life, documenting his declining health on social media, including the acquisition of his coffin, a custom-made flight case inscribed with the words "Flightcase To Heaven."

Beer Klaasse, whose drumming added immeasurably to Q65's second phase, was diagnosed with an aortic aneurysm in 2022, and died on 23rd December 2023.

Of the original Q65, only two members remain: Frank Nuijens and Peter Vink. Both stayed musically active for many years, Vink with the progressive rock group Knight Area, and Nuijens with the long-running rootsy Americana outfit The Freelance Band. When the pandemic arrived in early 2020, The Freelance Band fell apart and Frank retired from playing music. Peter Vink played his last gig with Knight Area at the end of 2023.

Frank reflects on his Q65 years with not only fondness, but also a sense of vindication. No longer "long-haired scum," the Kjoe are now respected cultural icons with a cult following around the world. "I look back enjoying all of what happened," he says. "I still have great memories. At that time we were looked upon as infamous wild savages making noise instead of music. It took a while for 'the establishment' to understand what we were doing and accept us for who we were and what we had accomplished, which our crowd, 'the youngsters' at that time, instantly understood. I still get a smile on my face, remembering those days." S!

With thanks to Hans van Vuuren

The Life We Live: Anthology 1965-2000 is out now on Pseudonym

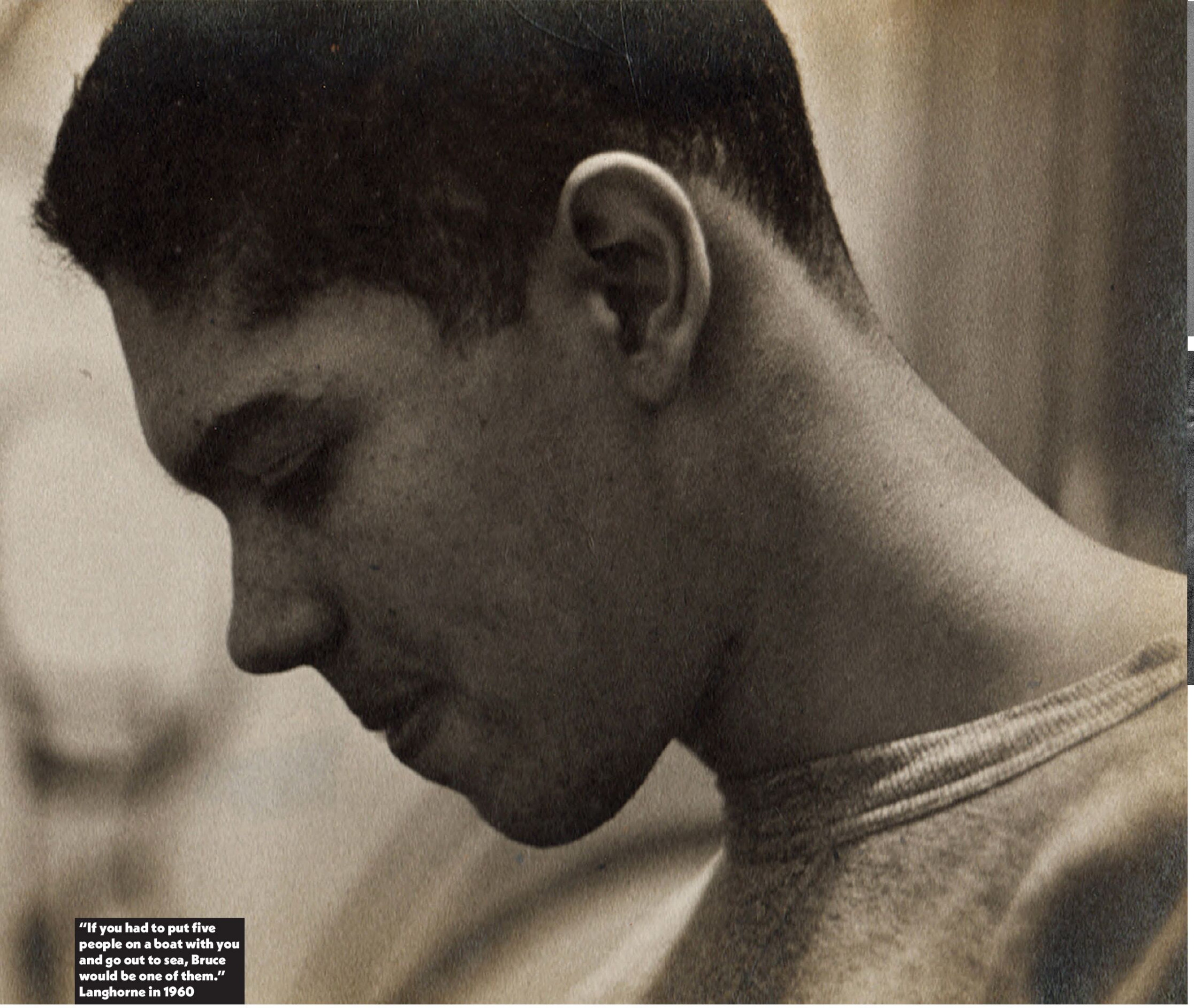
GHOSTS OF ELECTRICITY

Immortalised as the inspiration for 'Mr Tambourine Man' and appearances on Dylan's early electric recordings, **BRUCE LANGHORNE**'s place in history is carved in stone yet obscured by the undergrowth. With a distinctive style developed after a childhood accident resulted in the loss of multiple fingers, the "one-man house band" decorated songs by Odetta, Joan Baez and Richie Havens before turning his attention to film scores. On the seventh anniversary of his death, **SEÁN CASEY** studies the credits of one most prolific session players to emerge from Greenwich Village.

"I got to play gospel, I got to play Irish folk music, I got to play everything. And one of the things I got to do was play music with this kid Bob Dylan"

On 28th August 1963, Martin Luther King Jr delivered the most iconic speech in Civil Rights history in Washington DC. Prior to his "I have a dream" address, folk icon Odetta performed the underground railroad anthem 'I'm On My Way' at King's behest. Sharing the stage with the singer at Lincoln Memorial was 25-year-old guitarist and multi-instrumentalist Bruce Langhorne, who she'd met in the folk revival's bohemian birthplace of Greenwich Village at the turn of the decade.

Bruce Langhorne during the recording of Carolyn Hester's debut album, September 1961; Bruce and Odetta play during the March on Washington prior to Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech, 28th August 1963 (opposite)



"If you had to put five people on a boat with you and go out to sea, Bruce would be one of them." Langhorne in 1960

Born in Tallahassee, Florida in May 1938, Langhorne's parents separated four years later, and he moved to Harlem with his mother, a librarian and pianist. By the age of 12, Langhorne was a promising violinist, taking lessons at Juilliard, and attending the prestigious Horace Mann School in The Bronx (which counted Jack Kerouac as alumni) until disaster struck. After gripping a homemade rocket for too long, the pyrotechnic exploded, severing two and half of Langhorne's digits. "At least I don't have to play violin anymore," he told his mum.

Refusing to allow the accident to disrupt his ambition, instead Langhorne expanded his roster of instruments and developed an economic picking style for guitar using the nibs of his fingers.

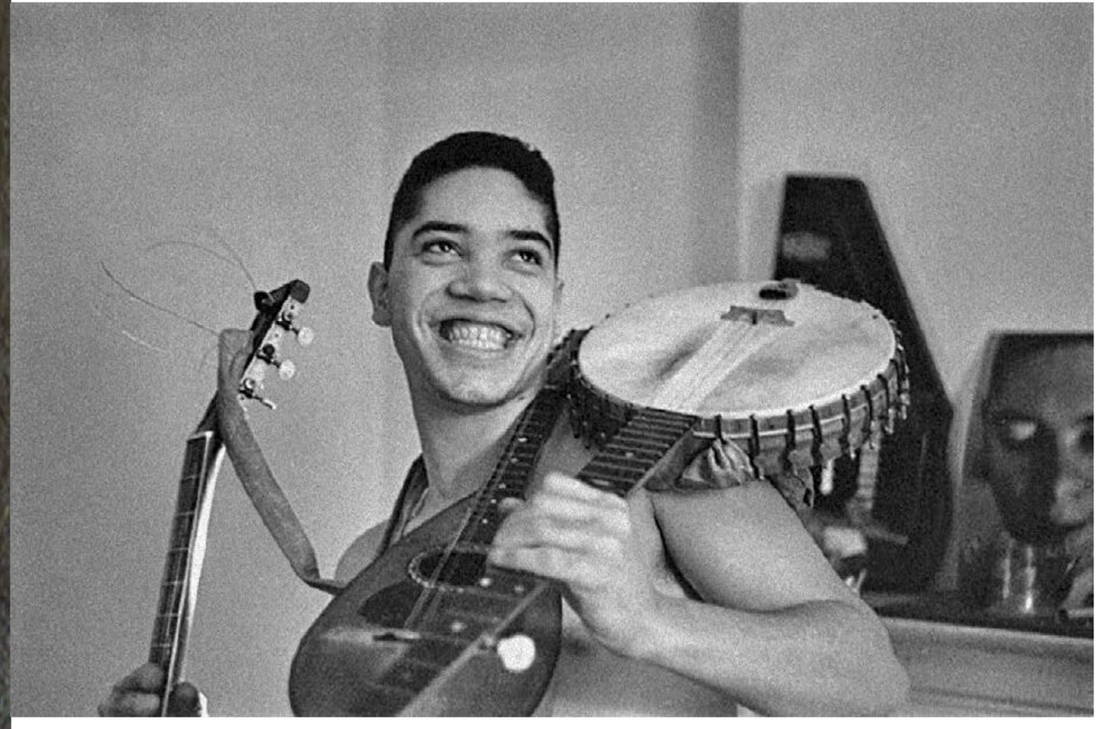
Alongside beatniks, activists, and poets, in the late '50s he was a familiar face in "basket houses" in New York's West Village. By the opening of the now legendary Gerde's Folk City in '60, Langhorne was the guitarist of choice due to his association with the club's MC, Brother John Sellers. "I used to play everything with everybody," he told Bob Porco, grandson of Gerde's owner Mike, in 2013. "I was playing gospel with this group called The Grandison Singers. I got to play with (Woody Guthrie collaborator) Cisco Huston and, well, I got to play with a lot of people who were playing out at Gerde's back in the day."

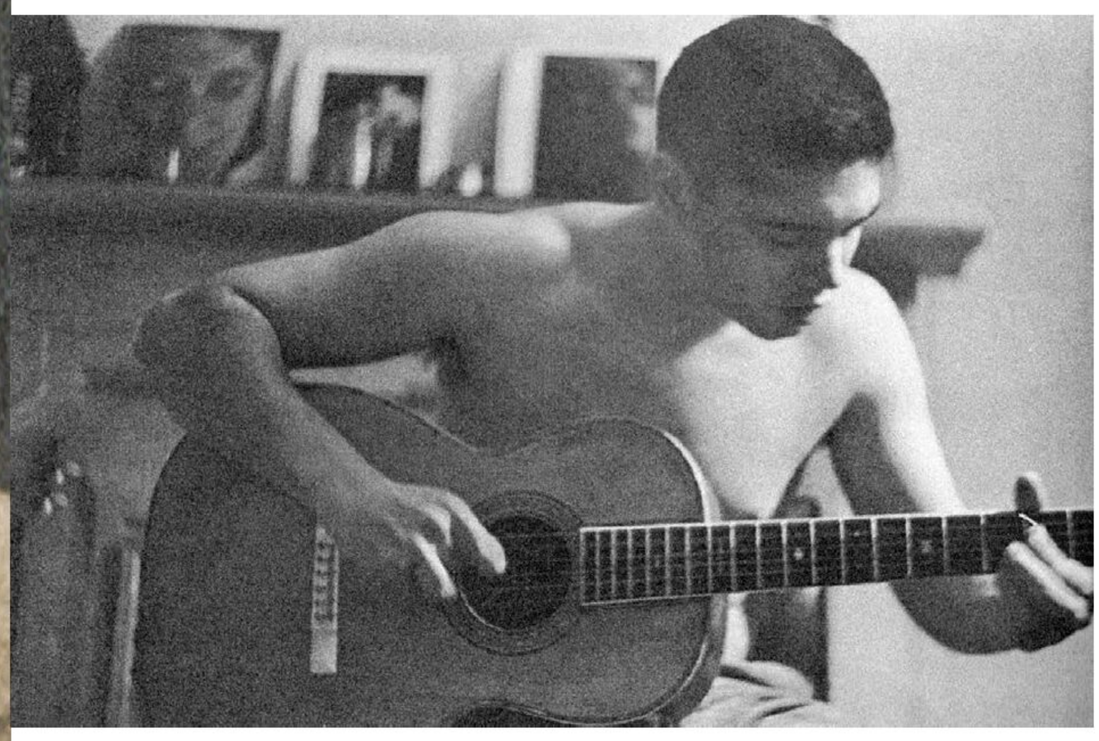
Among his first appearances on wax was The Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem's self-titled LP, followed by live album *A Spontaneous Performance Recording*. Released in '61, Pete Seeger performs banjo, with one of the Clancy Brothers jokingly – though presciently – introducing Seeger and Langhorne while advising the audience to "wait until they do something before you clap". Soon after, he played guitar, fiddle and harmonica with The Folk Singers Of Washington Square – an aggregation of musicians gathered from the Greenwich scene, featuring Alexander 'Sandy' Bull.

At Gerde's, Langhorne befriended singer Carolyn Hester and her husband Richard Fariña. When Hester came to record her third album in '62 – and first for Columbia – she called on Langhorne and Fariña's friend Bob Dylan to perform guitar and harmonica respectively.

Alongside Richie Havens, Langhorne was one of the few Black musicians on the scene and struck up a close friendship with Fariña due to his Cuban heritage. "It was a very white scene, and the two of us didn't quite fit in," Langhorne told David Hajdu in 2001 for his book *Positively 4th Street: The Lives And Times Of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Farina And Richard Farina*. They remained close until Fariña's untimely death in a motorcycle accident two days after the publication of his counterculture novel *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up To Me*.

Though already acquainted, the Hester sessions brought Langhorne and Dylan into closer contact. Initially, Langhorne wasn't bowled over. "I thought he was a terrible singer and a complete fake, and I thought he didn't play harmonica that well," he told Hajdu. Even so, in October '62 Langhorne joined sessions at Columbia's 7th Avenue Studios for what became *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, playing guitar on 'Corrina, Corrina'. Over the next three years, he was an integral





Bruce, Carolyn Hester, Bob Dylan and Bill Lee recording Hester's debut album, September 1961

> "I didn't really start to appreciate Bobby as something unique until he started writing"

part of Dylan's inner circle and a frequent collaborator. Langhorne later described their studio relationship as "telepathic" and in 2004 Dylan sent Langhorne a copy of his memoir *Chronicles Volume One*. It included a handwritten message that read, "Back there was something else! Like they say it was better to live in chains with friends than in a garden with strangers!".

Whether due to his association with Dylan or his growing reputation as one of Manhattan's top six-string players, he worked with artists ranging from Judy Collins to Henry Belafonte. "In New York, he was Mr Music," Langhorne's friend and – in later years – business partner, Cynthia Riddle explains to *Shindig!* "The word just got around. They all hung around in the same coffee houses, The Gas Light, Gerde's, The White Horse Tavern. It was like Paris in the '30s – a very small, connected community of creative people and Bruce was always in demand, not only because of his extraordinary musicianship, but also because if you had to put five people on a boat with you and go out to sea, Bruce would be one of them. He had a very positive attitude and was always telling jokes."

He performed on two versions of 'Blowin' In The Wind', firstly, for The Chad Mitchell Trio – which despite being recorded first, was pipped to the post by Peter, Paul & Mary's take – and subsequently during sessions for *Odetta Sings Folk Songs* released weeks after the pair's performance at The March On Washington in front of a 300,000-strong crowd.

Dylan recalled his time with Langhorne and bassist Bill Lee (Spike's father) in his autobiography. "Eventually, Bruce and Bill would play on my records. They'd played with Odetta and could play everything from melodic jazz to rockin' blues. If you had them playing with you, that's pretty much all you would need to do just about anything."

By then a convert ("I didn't really start to appreciate Bobby as something unique until he started writing"), while his contribution to *Freewheelin'* was limited, Langhorne played a more prominent role in Dylan's next – and arguably most important – album, *Bringing It All Back Home,* his corresponding licks to the artist's statements appearing throughout its controversial A-side. "Call and response, that's another aesthetic that I picked up from Black music," he told Richie Unterberger. "I always loved gospel music, because they really had that down."

How many times he performed live with Dylan is unknown, though a month prior to the album's release and subsequent "electric Dylan" furore, the two played together on *The Les Crane Show*, performing 'It's All Over Now, Baby Blue'. Fate intervened, ensuring that visual documentation of Langhorne in his heyday remains as scarce as hen's teeth. When Crane's show was axed months later, the tapes were wiped with only a grainy three-second clip of the performance remaining. Characteristically, while Langhorne's guitar can be heard, he's out of shot.

Dylan, however, would put him in the centre-frame of one of his most memorable songs. "'Mr Tambourine Man', I think, was inspired by Bruce Langhorne," he wrote in the sleeve notes to his '85 retrospective *Biograph*. "Bruce was playing guitar with me on a bunch of the early records. On one session, (producer) Tom Wilson had asked him to play tambourine. And he had this gigantic tambourine. It was, like, really big. It was as big as a wagon wheel. He was playing, and this vision of him playing this tambourine just stuck in my mind. He was one of those characters… he was like that. I don't know if I've ever told him that. I haven't seen him in a long time."

Though not the originator of "folk-rock" – he would credit Sandy Bull with this accolade – Langhorne was undoubtedly an innovator. Early electric recordings included songs with Fariña and his new wife Mimi (née Baez), such as 'One-Way Ticket' and 'Reno Nevada' taken from Mimi & Richard Fariña's debut *Celebrations For A Grey Day,* the first in a series of recordings he worked on for Vanguard. Similar subtleties are found on Dylan's 'Love Minus Zero', most notably heard in the blues phasing of 'Subterranean Homesick Blues'. All were achieved with a twin reverb amplifier borrowed from Bull.

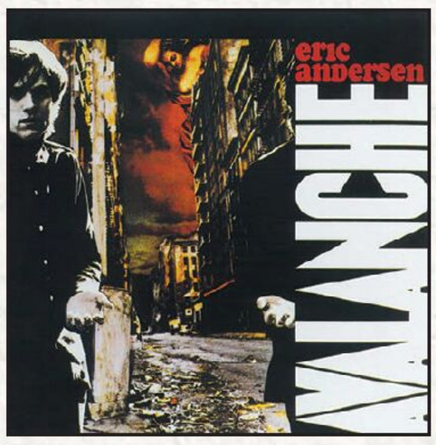
Evidently the early stimulus for Dylan going electric (aficionados suggest as far back as 'Mixed Up Confusion' in '62), Langhorne also supported Joan Baez's venture into a more contemporary folk-sound on her album *Farewell, Angela*.

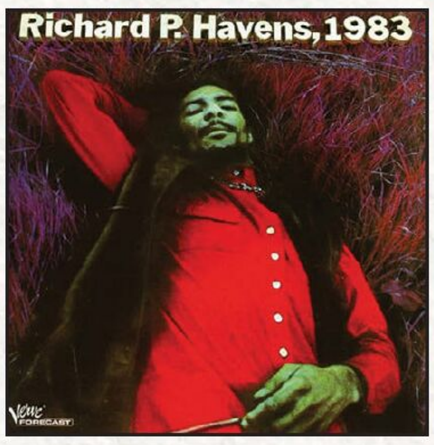
An LP by Lisa Kindred, recorded in '64, featured Langhorne. Despite being completed, it was shelved due to disputes between the artist and production team. The tapes were stolen and later released by backing musician and controversial cult leader Mel Lyman as *American Avatar*. (For a detailed account of Lyman's nefarious endeavours and Boston's Fort Hill Community, check out Ryan H Walsh's *Astral Weeks: A Secret History Of 1968*).

So much was Langhorne's influence beyond that of a typical session musician,

THE HIRED HAND

Shindig!'s favourite lesser-known Langhorne sessions





Richard & Mimi Fariña
Reflections In A Crystal Wind
(Vanguard, 1965)
Their final album before Richard Fariña's untimely death at the age of 29 is as archetypal American folk revival as it is enjoyable, but the drone-like backing of its highlight 'Raven Girl' provides the perfect canvass for Langhorne's hypnotic flicks.

Eric Andersen
Avalanche
(Warner Bros-Seven Arts, 1968)
Langhorne's bass, acoustic guitar and trademark "tambourine" are found throughout this psych-folk affair produced by soul favourite Gene Page, with Bruce's playing most easily identified on the delicate '(We Were) Foolish Like The Flowers'.

Ramblin' Jack Elliot
Young Brigham
(Reprise, 1968)
Langhorne's first foray into production was for Elliot, an early influence on Bob Dylan who played on a previous album under the alias Tedham Porterhouse. Though Langhorne's strings are absent, he can be heard on tabla throughout a beautiful version of 'Tim Hardin's 'If I Were A Carpenter'.

Richie Havens
Richard P Havens, 1983
(Verve, 1968)
Arranged by Langhorne, sitar-led 'Just Above My Hobby Horse's Head' was covered by the UK's Blossom Toes due to Brian Belshaw's vocal timbre, which was comparable to Havens'. It's one of two stand-outs, alongside 'Indian Ropeman', on the Orwell-inspired double-album made up of both live and studio recordings.

Tommy Flanders
The Moonstone
(Verve Forecast, 1969)
After leaving The Blues Project midway through the recording of their debut album in 1966, singer Flanders signed to Verve and released three singles before building up to a full-length album. Echoes of Langhorne's work with Dylan are found on 'By The Mailbox We Stood' and 'Sleepin'', but the title track's country-psych is drenched in his atmospheric quality.

he was introduced as "the lead electrical guitarist on the last Bob Dylan record" by Fariña during a performance at Newport Folk Festival in '65. When Odetta returned to RCA Studios later that year, who better to call-on for an album of Zimmerman covers than his right-hand man?

Langhorne's final '60s session with Dylan came soon after, on *Highway 61 Revisited*, however, with Mike Bloomfield drafted in on guitar, his input was limited to tambourine. As Dylan embarked on *Blonde On Blonde* in Nashville with Bloomfield, Al Kooper and Robbie Robertson before his 18-month hiatus, Langhorne wasn't short of offers elsewhere.

He co-arranged Mimi & Richard Fariña's *Reflections In A Crystal Wind*, boasting the mesmeric 'Raven Girl', which featured future Cream producer and Mountain bassist/vocalist Felix Pappalardi. Despite Pappalardi and Langhorne being photographed in a studio with Fred Neil and Jack Nitzsche, recordings didn't materialise, but Langhorne did contribute to Neil's *Sessions* in '68.

He was called on by notable artists such as Peter Walker, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Tom Rush and Gordon Lightfoot, sitting in on sessions, whether for percussive support on his tambourine – in fact a Turkish frame drum – or for his distinctive guitar playing.

In '66 he reunited with his old Gerde's friend, Richie Havens, arranging a spirited rendition of the unreleased Lightfoot song 'I Can't Make It Anymore' for Havens' sublime *Mixed Bag*. Havens performed the song in front of half a million people at Woodstock three years later and the pair collaborated again in '68 with Langhorne arranging the optimistic anti-war anthem 'Just Above My Hobby Horse's Head'. "Bruce held Richie in the highest regard," Riddle recalls.

In '68, he produced Ramblin' Jack Elliot's *Young Brigham* album, and his magic touch can be heard on 'Look Around Rock' and 'Mountain Song' taken from Penny Nichol's underappreciated acid-folk album *Penny's Arcade*. Divided into two recording phases conducted in New York and LA, Langhorne arranged the latter half after moving to California.

If his early career marked the beginning of the Civil Rights movement on the east coast, the next phase of his oeuvre would be at the heart of the counterculture movement on the west. Exchanging Greenwich Village for Laurel Canyon, he became friends with Joni Mitchell, but the two never recorded together. "Her music was so sophisticated that I couldn't just tune in and start playing and have it work," he told Unterberger. "I wound up just listening."

His connection to Dylan continued to serve him well in California. Trumpeter Hugh Masekela and producer Stuart Levine formed Chisa Records after they too relocated from east to west. Prior to the move, Masekela recorded with Dylan producer Tom Wilson, and met Langhorne around this time. On arrival in LA at the end of '66, Masekela found himself at Columbia Studios with The Byrds, lending his brass services to McGuinn and Hillman's satirical 'So You Want To Be A Rock 'n' Roll Star'. The session brought Masekela into contact with David Crosby's pal, actor Peter Fonda, who signed to Chisa to record an album. Though a full LP was recorded, ultimately only a single coupling versions of Gram Parsons' 'November Night' and Donovan's 'Catch The Wind' was released.

Due to their previous connection in New York, Langhorne became reacquainted with the Chisa team in California. He performed on Masekela's *The Promise Of A Future* featuring the instrumental hit 'Grazing In The Grass', and a friendship with Fonda blossomed when he was recruited to support the Chisa recordings. "I met Peter through Hugh," Langhorne later recalled. "We used to get together and get stoned and play drums at my house all the time. It used to be a ritual. And he introduced me to Peter, because they were trying to produce Peter and they had no idea of how to go about producing him, 'cause he was kind of folky, and they didn't know. So, they hired me, and Peter and I got to be friends."

The actor enlisted Langhorne to work on a concept album tentatively titled *Got To Get You Into My Life*, a project aborted when Fonda set off with Dennis Hopper and Jack Nicholson to make *Easy Rider*. When he returned to develop his directorial debut, the superb revisionist western *The Hired Hand*, he reconnected with Langhorne. Fonda explained in his memoir, *Don't Tell Dad* in '98, "Universal was quite nervous when I hired Bruce Langhorne to score the movie. He had no track record in their world. In my world,

"I was no good at Hollywood studio politics. And I didn't enjoy the parties"

Bruce accompanies Judy Collins on a visit to Japan in 1967; Bruce's Turkish "tambourine" and guitar

he was a virtuoso on more than 50 stringed instruments, played the piano expertly, and was very capable on the drums and an array of percussion instruments. I had an entire orchestra in one man, and he was a good friend. I had his backyard shed made into a tiny recording studio."

Aided by then-girlfriend Natalie Mucyn in this make-do studio in '69, Langhorne recorded an intricate masterpiece, combining proto-Americana with cosmic, Celtic folk. Notwithstanding positive reviews upon its release in two years later, the film was widely ignored at that time. It has since gained cult status, principally owing to a soundtrack that perfectly embodies the story's thematic pillars of guilt, friendship and revenge. Despite its intrinsic connection to the film, it stands alone. In its creation, Langhorne laid bare his soul, crafting a collection of lonely laments to the desert, evoking dusty abandoned townships and derelict saloons haunted by the souls of frontier ghosts. Despite Universal's scepticism, it paved the way for a new approach to scoring for film, influencing contemporaries such as Ry Cooder, whose spiritually adjacent soundtrack underpinned Wim Winders' *Paris, Texas* 15 years later. Fonda recruited Langhorne for his follow-up *Idaho Transfer* released in '73, and the same year Langhorne reunited with Dylan a final time for the soundtrack to Sam Peckinpah's anti-western *Pat Garrett & Billy The Kid*.

Though his recording credits continued throughout the '70s, they slowed and largely consisted of scores for long-since forgotten films such as *Fighting Mad* (starring Fonda), *Stay Hungry* featuring an early performance by Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jonathan Demme's *Melvin And Howard*. At the end of the decade, he joined Arica – an institute centred around the teachings of Oscar Ichazo concerned with finding the path toward spiritual and transcendental knowledge, where he met his wife Janet.

In '83 he devised a '40s big band-inspired score for the Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell flop *Swing Shift*. Despite support from director Demme, the soundtrack was rejected by the studio. Disappointed, discontent and unsuited to the celebrity orbit of LA, he moved to Hawaii, where he and Janet farmed macadamia nuts. "I was no good at Hollywood studio politics. And I didn't enjoy the parties," he told Michael Ross in 2014.

The couple remained there for five years but later returned to California. Following a diagnosis for diabetes in '92, alongside Riddle, he founded Brother Bru-Bru's, a health-conscious hot sauce business (Langhorne is seen sporting a branded Bru-Bru tee-shirt in Martin Scorsese's *No Direction Home*).

In 2006, he suffered a stroke and was forced to turn to charitable support to help with mounting medical bills. He sold his famous tambourine to The Bob Dylan Centre in Oklahoma, where it remains today, and while many of his former collaborators fell silent, Dylan and Fonda stepped-up making the pilgrimage to his home in LA to visit. Fonda and Langhorne remained close until his passing in 2017 of kidney failure and – as of March 2024 – footage of the two warmly reminiscing about their friendship, filmed by Riddle, is available on YouTube.

Interest in his work returned when Dylan Aycock, musician and label boss at Scissor Tail Records, stumbled across a discussion about *The Hired Hand* in an online forum. "I'd never heard music like that before," Aycock tells *Shindig!* "It's such a calming album, and he plays with restraint in a way that I hadn't heard from an artist of that era."

Roused by a desire to encourage others to tune-in, Aycock released *The Hired Hand* in 2012. It has since become a staple of musos and vinyl junkies worldwide, as well as reigniting interest in the film – now widely considered a classic of the anti-western genre.

Shortly before Langhorne's passing, Aycock gathered contemporary musicians to record a tribute album, naturally entitled *The Hired Hands*, culminating in live performances of his work in New York and London. Alongside Riddle, Aycock continues to keep Langhorne's legacy alive today.

As Riddle works on an overdue documentary featuring interviews with Joni Mitchell, John Sebastian and Tom Rush, Aycock hopes to reissue Langhorne's sci-fi-synth-folk score to *Idaho Transfer*. "It's a struggle because, like *The Hired Hand*, the original reels are long gone so the source material has some dialogue, but it's an amazing soundtrack. It sounds like Boards Of Canada but 25-30 years before them."

In 2001, Langhorne reflected on the '60s cultural revolution. "It was one eclectic movement that included a fabulously diverse group of individuals," he told Toni Ruiz. "Some of us just loved to play and sing the music, some of us were into poetry, some of us were into the historical and cultural background of the music, some of us were into the current and historical political implications and applications of the music, some of us were into sex, drugs and alcohol, but everyone was a little bit into everything."

Aycock sums up the *Shindig!* view. "I think he put taste before bells and whistles. I always thought it funny that the film was titled *The Hired Hand* when Bruce's whole life was spent being the best hired hand to all of our favourite musicians." S!

With special thanks to Cynthia Riddle and Dylan Aycock

In the late ’60s **THE ISLEY BROTHERS** reinvented themselves as a white-hot Black rock band, building on the psychedelic soul of The Temptations and Sly & The Family Stone, with the dextrous guitar playing of baby brother Ernie to the fore.

JOHNNIE JOHNSTONE charts their meteoric rise

BROTHERHOOD OF ***

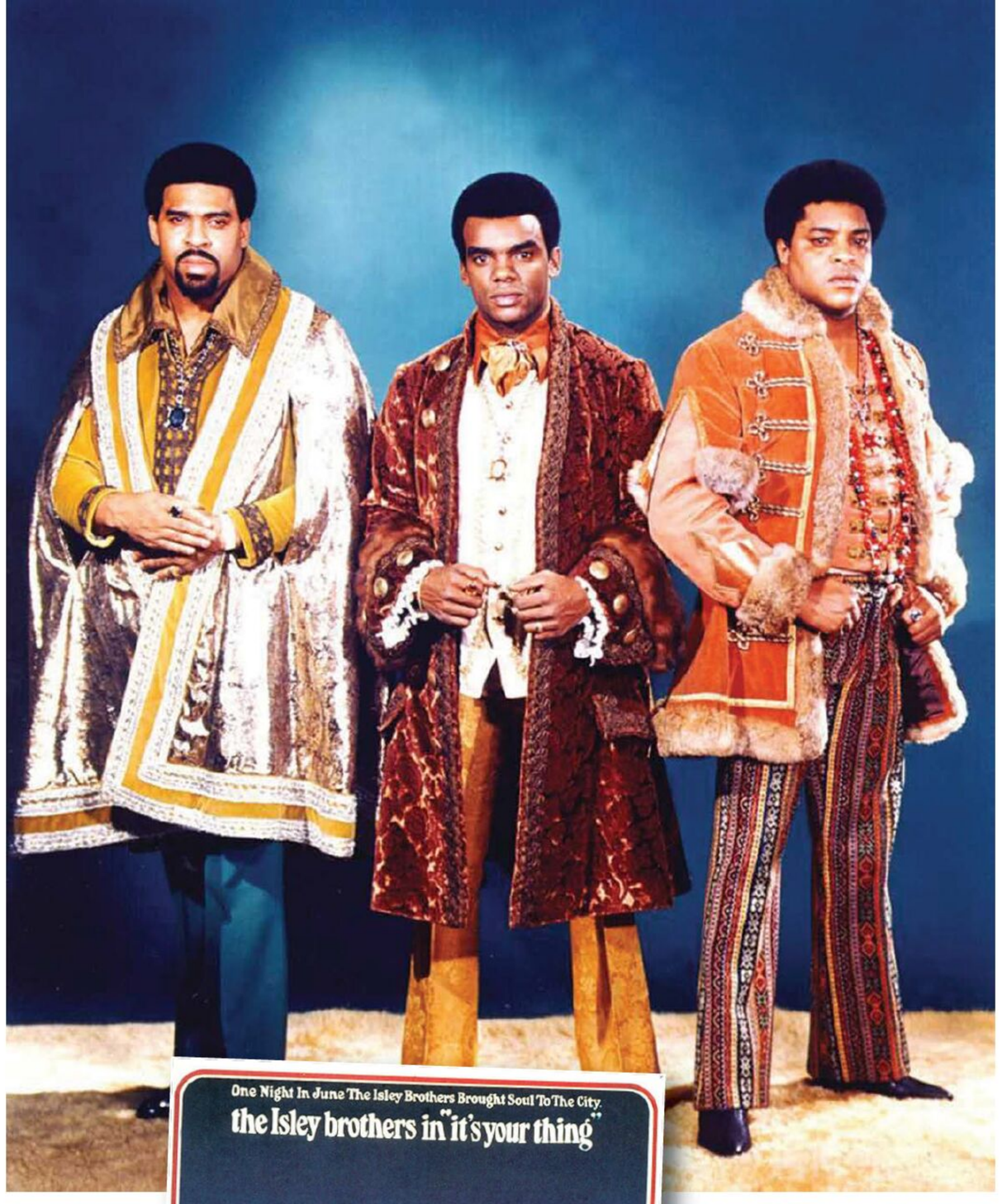
MAN!

“Where would we have been without The Isley Brothers? We’d still be in Liverpool!”
(Paul McCartney, Apollo Theatre Benefit, 2012)

When The Isley Brothers walked out on Motown in 1968, it had been over two years since they’d troubled the pop charts. ‘This Old Heart Of Mine (Is Weak For You)’, which made #12 in April ’66, had borne all the hallmarks of the classic motor city sound – giddy strings, harmonies soaring to the heavens, a melody to die for, underpinned by one the greatest rhythm sections in the business. Clean-cut fresh-faced boys in bright trim uniform, singing about the only four-letter word that really mattered. But then their career seemed to stall. The decision to leave Motown didn’t mean they were planning to quit performing, but even if they had been, their legacy was assured.

Although they couldn’t have foreseen it at the time, their career was only beginning. By November ’68, with ‘This Old Heart Of Mine’ enjoying a second stint in the upper reaches of the chart, the Isleys were making records on their own label, T-Neck. Named after The New Jersey township of Teaneck, where lead singer Ronald Isley had bought a home, the label had a distribution deal with hip imprint Buddha. It was the beginning of a period of radical reinvention for the Isleys, one that would meet with great critical and commercial acclaim.

The Isley Brothers in 1973, as the album *3 + 3* sat in the US Top 10. L-R: Kelly, Chris Jasper (standing), Ernie (sitting), Rudolph, Ronald, Marvin



Kelly, Ronald and Rudolph in the late '60s; 1970; '69's *It's Your Thing* concert film

The Isley family – six sons – grew up in the Lincoln Heights area of Cincinnati, with the four eldest brothers – O'Kelly (he would later drop the "O'"), Rudolph, Ronald and Vernon – groomed as budding gospel singers by their mother Sallye, a musical teacher, and their father O'Kelly Sr, an ex-sailor and vaudeville performer. In '55, the youngest of the four, Vernon, would tragically lose his life in a car accident. He was only 13. The remaining trio briefly disbanded but were soon given the green light by their father to try to make it in popular music, moving to New York in '57, while still in their teens. With Ronald replacing Vernon as lead vocalist, the group's identity began to solidify, as they blended doo-wop, gospel and R&B in their bid to find a winning combination. Impatient for success, they moved freely between labels – Teenage, Cindy, Mark X, Gone, RCA Victor, Scepter, Wand, United Artists and Atlantic, releasing around 30 singles between '57 and '65. Only one of those had any significant commercial return. 'Twist And Shout' ('62) – soon to be recycled by some scruffy young mop-tops across the Atlantic – made the Top 20. Some songs had potential but found greater success in others' hands: 'Shout' ('59) was reworked with great aplomb by Lulu six years later. "It just grew out of a thing that we'd get into at the end of a number, the sort of thing we'd do in church," Ronald Isley told Harvey Kubernik for *Melody Maker* in October '75. The follow-up, 'Respectable' also found a new home, when a rousing rendition was included on *Five Live Yardbirds* in '64. The same year – with the group now signed to United Artists – they recorded 'Who's That Lady' a midtempo organ groover which they would rework to devastating effect in '73. They were soon briefly joined on The Chitlin' Circuit by a young guitarist from Seattle. His name was Jimi Hendrix. He recorded some songs with them but was too great a talent to be contained within the confines of an R&B vocal group (see sidebar).

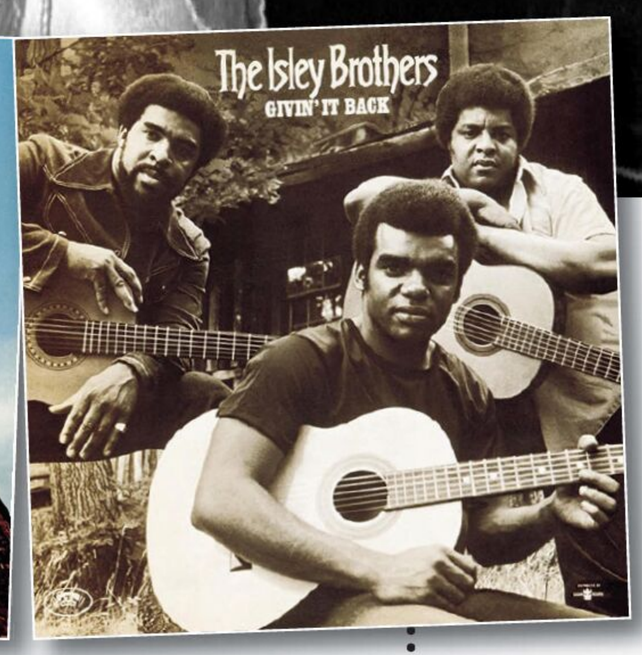
Next stop? Motown. For all that the Isleys were synonymous with Tamla Motown in the '60s, they were at the label for less than three years, releasing only a handful of 45s and two LPs. The first of those, *This Old Heart Of Mine*, reworked much of the extant Holland-Dozier-Holland songbook ('Nowhere To Run', 'Stop! In The Name Of Love', 'I Hear A Symphony'). They ought to have consolidated the success of the album's title track, but singles such as the astounding 'My Love Is Your Love (Forever)' were shelved, while others barely registered. By the time their second LP for Motown, *Soul On The Rocks*, had completely bombed, they'd become Increasingly disenchanted with the label's formulaic rigidity, and Berry Gordy's apparent preference for The Four Tops, Temptations and Supremes. The Brothers sensed it was the right time to bail out.

It was the age of the album. The album as art. The Beatles were doing it. Their old guitarist Jimi Hendrix was doing it. Maybe the Isleys had it in them to make their own enduring artistic statement. Motown was an unstoppable hit factory, so the brothers knew it was a gamble.

"There would be no point in starting a record label unless you knew who was going to produce, arrange, manage and distribute," Rudolph told Richard Green for *NME* in August '69. "You can't hire other people to come up with the ideas, it has to be your own job, you must have complete control." Ronnie affirmed this view. "It wasn't a rushed thing; it took us 18 months to find the right formula. The sound was all-important."

The Isley Brothers had big plans for T-Neck. From their premises on Broadway, with Rudolph and Ronald directing operations, they recruited a number of up-and-coming young artists and groups, including Dave 'Baby' Cortez, Judy White, The Vandals, Marva Whitney, Joyce Holiday and The Sweet Cherries, as well as the rock band Privilege. Few of them met with success. Nineteen sixty-nine would be a pivotal year for the group with two albums and an all-star summer concert (filmed at the Bronx's Yankee Stadium, with a roster including Ike & Tina Turner and The Edwyn Hawkins Singers) that would eventually be released as a film (*It's Your Thing*) the following summer, pre-empting the movie made about The Harlem Cultural Festival (later released in 2021 as *Summer Of Soul*) and *Wattstax*. It provided an early indication that the Isleys were in complete artistic control. And alongside the clothes (out went the orange suits, in came fur coats, beads and bell bottoms), the music was

Ernie lets rip; 1970 and '71 albums



changing too.

The Isleys' first post-Motown album appeared in April '69. *It's Our Thing* yielded the monster Grammy-grabbing 45 'It's Your Thing', an infectious brassy groove that somehow managed to capture the psychedelic-soul zeitgeist. Kelly had floated the idea of releasing music under the name Brothers Three, in part to liberate themselves from the hipsters' perception of Motown groups as artistically deficient, mere hit-making vehicles for Berry Gordy. Other groups such as The Chambers Brothers were crossing over into the rock market, showing that African-Americans could be more than blues singers or record label puppets. "Our first record expressed what we were looking for: 'It's your thing / Do what you wanna do / I can't tell you who to sock it to,'" Kelly told John Abbey in *Blues & Soul* in September '70. This was an earthier sound altogether, pitched midway between the grit and guts of Stax ('Feel Like The World', 'I Must Be Losing My Touch') and the buoyancy of Sly ('It's Your Thing'). More crucially, this was their *own* sound, and even if the musical backing was in large part provided by some of New York's finest session musicians, it also introduced the world to the second youngest Isley brother, Ernie, who somewhat surreptitiously contributed bass and guitar to the album. Ernie had watched his brothers at close quarters and had been mesmerised when Jimi Hendrix joined the boys on stage. He would learn from Jimi but there was never any intention to imitate, as explained to Joe McEwen of *Phonograph Record* in June '76. "Everybody always mentions how much I try to sound like Hendrix or how I was influenced by him. But really, I picked up the guitar for one reason, to play Jose Feliciano's 'Light My Fire'. In fact, for a long time, that's all I could play." Ernie would go on to become the central driving force behind the group's '70s success. But for now, he remained very much in the shadows.

The "Brothers Three" idea proved a stayer and following the group's independently produced concert movie in the summer, their next album, released in early Autumn '69, featured one of the most striking covers of the era, the trio draped in bright red monastic habits, complete with cincture and capuche. It is possible, revelling in their newfound freedoms, they wanted to out-do the Civil War outfits worn by The Temptations on the previous year's *Wish It Would Rain*. Despite the sleeve, *Brothers: Isley* was nowhere near as strong as its predecessor although it did contain the epic soaring blues ballad 'Feels Like The World'. Throughout the various stages of their career, the Isleys would always include at least one killer ballad on their albums.

Get Into Something ('70) was revelatory. Here was the blueprint for the future Isleys sound. On the outstanding title track in particular, there was a more explicit accommodation of Sly's euphoric funk and James Brown's lengthy "give the drummer some" jams, with tracks lengthening in duration from the customary two and a half minutes to six or seven with increasing frequency. *Get Into Something* became one of the group's most collectible efforts given its scarcity on vinyl, and at its best, on 'If He Can You Can' featuring dynamite wah-wah guitar by Charles 'Skip' Pitts of *Shaft* fame, and tremolo-laden vocal effects *a la* 'Crimson And Clover', was a thrilling listen. Ultimately however, it was let

"Everybody always mentions how much I try to sound like Hendrix or how I was influenced by him. But really, I picked up the guitar for one reason, to play Jose Feliciano's 'Light My Fire'" **Ernie Isley**

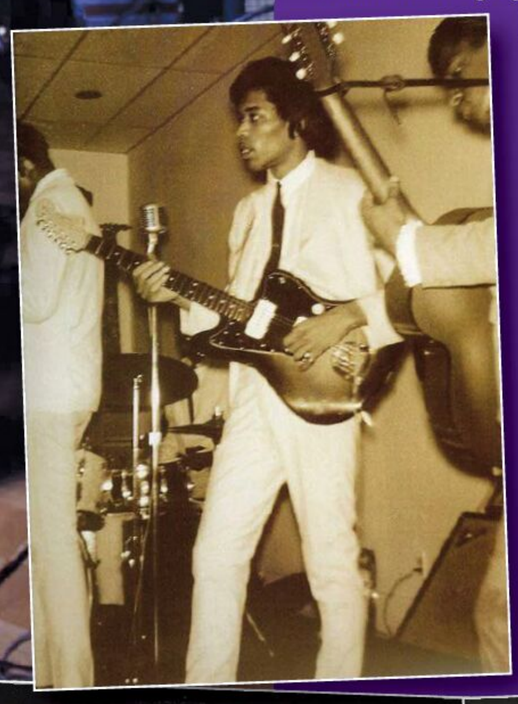
TESTIFY!

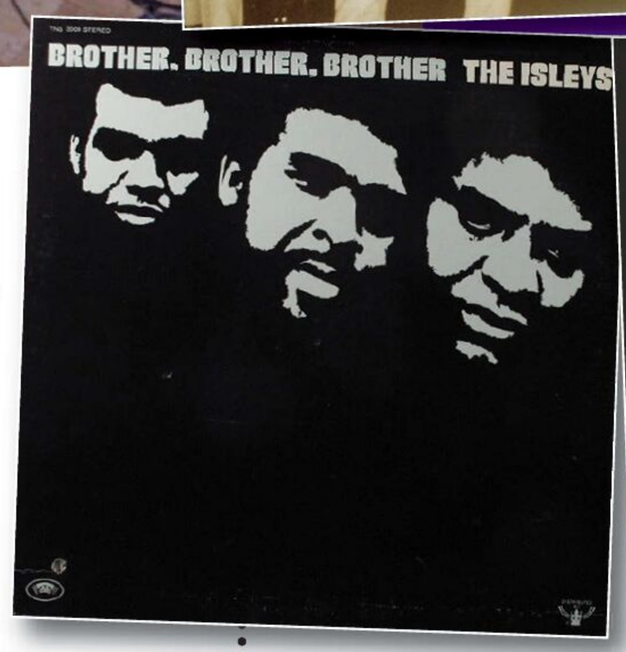
Nineteen sixty-four was a crucial year for the Isleys. They founded their own production company (T-Neck), from which a record label would emerge in '68. It was also the year they met a young R&B guitarist called Jimi Hendrix

The Isleys had been looking for a new guitarist, their own guitarist having recently quit. As future guitarist Ernie Isley recalled in conversation with Maurice DuBois on the *CBS Sunday Morning Show* in 2017, Kelly and Ronald heard about "this guy in the Village who could play guitar well". "They found him and said, 'Hey, play something for me,' and he said, 'I can't. My guitar is in the pawn shop, and it doesn't have any strings on it.'" Having purchased the necessary accoutrements, the brothers were treated to their first taste of Jimi's playing. At first, they stood open-mouthed as they watched the young musician stringing his guitar then flipping it upside down! They knew nothing about him, other than hearsay, but he had most certainly heard of them as Ronald continues. "He said, 'I've heard about you guys' and then he started playing 'Twist And Shout'. We hired him right away."

Jimi had nowhere to stay so the Isleys fixed up the spare room in their mother's house. "The guitar he had was scruffy, so we asked him what he wanted," adds Ronald. "He said, 'Really?' We got him a white Fender Stratocaster. At our first gig, it changed the whole dynamic. People went crazy for him, but he was respectful, polite and a fast learner." Hendrix would record a set of songs with the Isleys, which later became available on '71 archival collection *In The Beginning*. He would have a hugely profound influence on the band. Jimi was still unknown, but one can already hear his dextrous workmanship on the incredible 'Move Over And Let Me Dance', and the riff on 'Testify' prefigures 'Fire'. More pertinently, youngest Isley bro Ernie was keeping a keen eye on their talented new guitarist, with whom he shared one of his fondest memories as a boy. "When The Beatles played on *The Ed Sullivan Show* for the first time, I was sat on the couch, with Marvin on the right side and Jimi Hendrix in the middle."

Johnnie Johnstone





Chris Jasper, an "immense contribution"; Hendrix with the Isleys in 1964; '72 and '73 albums

down by an unnecessary rehash of 'It's Your Thing' (re-titled 'Bless Your Heart') and the boozy dinner party swing of 'Boys Will Be Boys, Girls Will Be Girls', a rare clunker.

The Brothers' next album surprised everyone, but it would prove to be an important moment of transition and a genius career move. For the first time, the younger two Isleys (Ernie and Marvin, alongside their cousin Chris Jasper), were given greater scope to provide the musical backing for the album. The front cover of '71's *Givin' It Back* might have suggested the three older brothers were talented musicians, sat as they were with acoustic guitars on their laps, but the effect conveyed a different idea – that the Isleys could be a completely self-contained musical unit. "Everyone was looking for something new and wondering where it was going to come from," Marvin told Joe McEwen for *Phonograph Record*. "But nobody ever thought The Isley Brothers would be the ones to pull it off." The idea to cover the songs of successful white rock artists was a subtle act of defiance, given that their early catalogue had been ransacked by white musicians. Socially, it's an important album, in its successful blurring of the lines between rock and funk. "It was a deliberate decision," Jasper told Vernon Gibbs of *Essence* in May '75, "because rock is an extension of R&B. Rock was taken from blues and R&B, so when people say we've gone into another type of music, they're wrong. It's just that long guitar solos are associated with rock music, but they actually came from the blues. All we are trying to do is use every facet of our musical knowledge and combine them into our own new sound."

Givin' It Back also featured a contribution on guitar from Bill Withers on the group's reworking of his own 'Cold Bologna', but more impressively, the nine-minute medley of Crosby Stills & Nash's 'Ohio' with Jimi's 'Machine Gun' arguably outclassed the originals. An 11-minute 'Lay Lady Lay' just about overstayed its welcome, but Ronald's heartfelt rendition of James Taylor's 'Fire And Rain' expressed the full range of his vocal artistry. By now, Ronald's voice was becoming a thing of wonder – he could be tender and sweet, gritty and authoritative. Caramel, salt or honey, it makes him one of the most undervalued vocalists of the era, with a versatile range – from supple tenor to sweet falsetto. He never got the credit that Stevie, Curtis or Al Green routinely received, but his contribution is arguably as significant. *Givin' It Back* might only have reached the lower reaches of the album chart, but it worked wonders for the group's profile.

If the Isleys had demonstrated on '70's *Get Into Something*, that they could out-funk Sly and the JBs, on the title track of '72 classic *Brother, Brother, Brother,* they paid homage to another artist whose album had recently broken completely new ground. The blueprint for 'Brother Brother' was undoubtedly Marvin Gaye's game-changing *What's Going On*. It was illustrative of the group's ability to recycle and refashion other sounds into something new and original. The album itself was their best and most consistent to date, although they possibly overstretched themselves on an 11-minute makeover of Carole King's classic 'It's Too Late' (the single edit clocked in at 3:32). Elsewhere, 'Work To Do', later covered by The Average White Band (note how the two-way street continued), harnessed the breezy glide of Marvin (in its sweeping intro) with a juicy slice of southern-fried funk, while the closer, 'Love Put Me On The Corner' was a gorgeous precursor to the next album's sublime extended ballads. *Brother, Brother, Brother* was their highest charting LP since *It's Our Thing*. The Isleys were going places.

The upwards trajectory continued with their next outing, *3 + 3*. Out of the shadows emerged Ernie, Marvin and cousin Chris, finally thrust into the spotlight for their immense contribution

Streetwise. The Isley Brothers rewired for their greatest success in the mid-70s

"Before *3 + 3* there was more singing than playing, but we've all matured in our playing so it was just decided that we would become part of the group" Chris Jasper

in engineering the Isleys' reversal of fortunes. In truth, it would have been inexcusable not to mark Ernie's contribution, given its outrageous guitar solo – featuring Hendrix-style sustain – on the album's flagship 45 'That Lady' (a killer reworking of the '63 track 'Who's That Lady?'). The song was so vital to the album, that its proper title was *3 + 3 Featuring That Lady*. There they were, finally, all six of them, clad in their ludicrously glam urban hipster get-up. "A new concept evolved with *3 + 3*," Marvin told Vernon Gibbs of *Essence* magazine in '75. "Part of the concept," Chris Jasper continued, "was to allow more room for just instrumental playing. Before *3 + 3* there was more singing than playing, but we've all matured in our playing so it was just decided that we would become part of the group."

As well as scoring the band (finally *that* noun seemed appropriate) their first Top 10 single in four years, 'That Lady' kickstarted another Isleys trend of separating into two parts: their lengthier extended jams, with Part 2 almost inevitably a showcase for Ernie's blazing solos. Ernie was fast becoming the central figure in the new Isleys sound, and he delivered an equally devastating performance on the album's penultimate track and future 45, a fantastic version of Seals & Crofts' soft-rock anthem 'Summer Breeze'. The closer was arguably their greatest ballad. 'Highways Of My Life', initially the B-side of 'What It Comes Down To', became a Top 30 UK hit in '74, following the success of 'That Lady'. *3 + 3* proved beyond question that the Isleys could compete both commercially and artistically with the Steely Dans and Little Feats and Temptations of this world. Every song was a winner, and it remains until this day their undisputed masterpiece. Kelly Isley, speaking to Jon Abbey for *Blues & Soul,* offered a tantalising clue about the band's future direction. "We're going to be recording an album on our three backing musicians. We haven't given them a name yet, even, but there's a master guitarist, Ernie Isley, bass player Marvin Isley, and keyboards player Chris Jasper. We may just call them Plus Three since our album is called *3 + 3*. We'll be starting to record that album and our next album both in January." However, that idea did not materialise, and The Isley-Jasper-Isley configuration did not finally emerge until the group's split in '83.

Live It Up, the band's next album, was equally successful, although its singles ('Live It Up' and 'Midnight Sky' – once again two-part epics) occupied only modest chart positions. "*3 + 3* put one foot in the door, but *Live It Up* tore the door off the hinges," Ernie suggested to Vernon Gibbs. Without question, this was the most "rock" album of their career, Ernie increasingly the exhibitionist (check out Part Two of 'Ain't I Been Good To You'). There were still ballads – the gorgeous 'Brown Eyed Girl' (no, not *that* one) and a cover – here, a lovely take of Todd Rundgren's 'Hello, It's Me'. By now, they had achieved what they had set out to achieve and were in complete artistic control, as Ernie explained to Harvey Kubernik for *Melody Maker* in October '75. "We've now got the artistic avenue we've been looking for. We are doing things now that most groups, particularly Black groups, have been limited in previously. We're even more conscious of recording costs and time. We're not set to one formula, and we don't spend hours sitting around mixing and recording. We've gotten more discipline and things are really cool now. Before we were on a leash."

By '75's *The Heat Is On*, the transformation from B-List Motown vocal group to global pop superstars was complete. It proved that the lights of Cincinnati had shone brighter than any of their Detroit counterparts, and the LP sailed to the top of the album chart, spawning another ground-breaking Top 10 45, the bubbling funk groover 'Fight The Power (Parts 1 & 2)', later purloined by Public Enemy for their mega-selling hit of the late '80s. The funk was getting deeper and darker, and the success Stateside would continue well into the '80s, with a string of platinum-selling LPs. "It's been an advantage being a family working together," said Marvin Isley to Harvey Kubernik. "Sure, we have fights and arguments just like everybody else. But we also laugh and work together." Indeed, amid the laughter, the Isleys had work to do, redefining what "Black music" meant and, more importantly, what it could be. Against all the odds, they had out-thought, out-fought and outsold all of their rivals. S!

ALL THOSE HA

Time for bed. The Young Rascals in early 1966, as 'Good Lovin'' shoots to #1. L-R: Eddie Brigati, Felix Cavaliere, Gene Cornish, Dino Danelli

APPY PEOPLE

Forged in the tough New York clubs of the mid-60s, THE YOUNG RASCALS emerged fully formed with a celebratory soul/R&B/pop hybrid that saw them conquer the US charts and inspire a wave of soundalikes.

Singer and pianist/organist Felix Cavaliere talks SEAN EGAN through hating their name, being signed to Atlantic and unwittingly soundtracking The Summer Of Love

Lined up in 1966 and already outgrowing the "young" tag

April 2013. Broadway's Richard Rodgers Theatre is hosting the multi-media event The Rascals: Once Upon A Dream. Four decades after their dissolution, the band famous as both The Young Rascals and The Rascals for a string of soul, pop and psychedelic classics, have their name in lights once more, their faces emblazoned six feet high on the venue's doors. This is pleasing enough for musicians who have enjoyed wildly fluctuating fortunes since their heyday, but particularly gratifying is the fact that the parking lot directly across the street was once singer Joey Dee's Starlighter Club. In 1964 on the very steps of that now demolished building, Dee had pursued out of its doors Eddie Brigati, Felix Cavaliere and Gene Cornish – the trio who would form the nucleus of The Rascals and who had just quit his house band over poor treatment – to inform them in profane language and high decibels that they were never going to amount to anything.

Classically trained pianist Cavaliere, from Pelham, New York was the privileged and studious son of a widowed dentist father. The latter was slightly disappointed when his boy abandoned pre-med school for music. In contrast, guitarist Cornish's artistic ambitions had always been indulged by his beloved store owner stepfather. Born in Canada but raised in Rochester, New York State, the big-boned Cornish was both sentimental and temperamental. Brigati hailed from Garfield, New Jersey. Although he stood only five foot four, both his personality and singing voice were decidedly larger than life.

Cavaliere had toured both home and abroad with Joey Dee & The Starlighters. By '64, Dee had parleyed his early '60s chart success kicked off by 'Peppermint Twist' into his own New York club and it was here that the Brigati/Cavaliere/Cornish trio coalesced. The always ambitious Cavaliere floated amongst his new colleagues the idea of going out on their own. Although the house band's drummer declined, this was serendipity because it led them to what Cavaliere describes as "this phenomenal drummer" by the name of Dino Danelli. Danelli was a street kid with matinee idol looks from West New York, New Jersey. He had picked up unusually refined New Orleans and jazz chops on his already considerable travels. Both Danelli's judicious drumming and sculpting hobby were at odds with his damaged personality. Like all his Rascals bandmates, he was able to avoid Vietnam but, notes Cavaliere, "I don't think he had to pretend anything. He was not a normal person when he went into that draft board."

The new ensemble was blessed with both an abundance of ability and an instant musical chemistry. "We could stand up to just about any band in the world, on stage especially," says Cavaliere, adding, "Three songwriters in a band – that's unheard of." He could also add that all three composers were blessed with more than capable singing voices, with Brigati's possessed of nasal pugnaciousness, Cavaliere's an achingly soulful tone and Cornish a rounder, smoother style. "I really believe that the higher powers made that band happen," Cavaliere says, though does append, "I found everyone but a bass player." There was no thought, however, of adding a fifth member. Cavaliere: "The concept that I had was based around an organ trio that I had seen. I said, 'Oh my God, these guys are a whole orchestra.'"

If anything, the band had too much talent. Although Brigati was the stage frontman, between Cavaliere's preference for handling songs he felt suited his voice and Cornish's insistence on delivering the one or two songs he usually contributed, Brigati habitually ended up singing lead on at most only around half the cuts on any album. Cavaliere concedes that this was something destined to cause Brigati – a non-musician – some frustration and insecurity.

The band originally went by the name Them until the chart success of 'Here Comes The Night' alerted them to the existence of a certain Irish group with the same handle. The derivation of Rascals is disputed. Cornish swears it arose from Danelli watching a late-night TV showing of *The Little Rascals* (repackaged versions of the old Hal Roach rapscallion cinema shorts *Our Gang*) and feeling the name would perfectly complement the knickerbockers and Little Lord Fauntleroy collars they adopted in an age during which it was felt that any self-respecting group should have a fatuous visual

Out go the matching outfits; 1966 singles; NYC club The Peppermint Lounge, where the group coalesced

gimmick. Cavaliere is just as adamant, though, that the name stems from the group's attempt to gain employment with TV comedian Soupy Sales. "He had a big hit record at the time called 'The Mouse'. We said, 'How about we ask him if we could back him up?' During that process, he asked us, 'Well, what's your name?' And we really didn't have a name. He ultimately said, 'Well, I know what I'd like to call you, but we couldn't print it.' So he called us The Rascals."

Yet it all almost ended as soon as it had begun. Brigati was involved in a road accident right at the point at which the band secured a promising residency in The Hamptons at a club named The Barge. Cavaliere: "It's going to be really a big deal because of the fact that all the people who are anybody in any industry, especially showbusiness, they go to The Hamptons for the summer." It was touch-and-go at one point whether Brigati would survive, and consequently whether The Rascals could prosper without their maraca-shaking, crowd-baiting frontman. "I was sitting in the back like a piano player taking care of music," reflects Cavaliere. "I wasn't paying attention to the audience. He was, and they loved him." Brigati was accordingly transported from his sickbed to play at least one of their three nightly Barge sets.

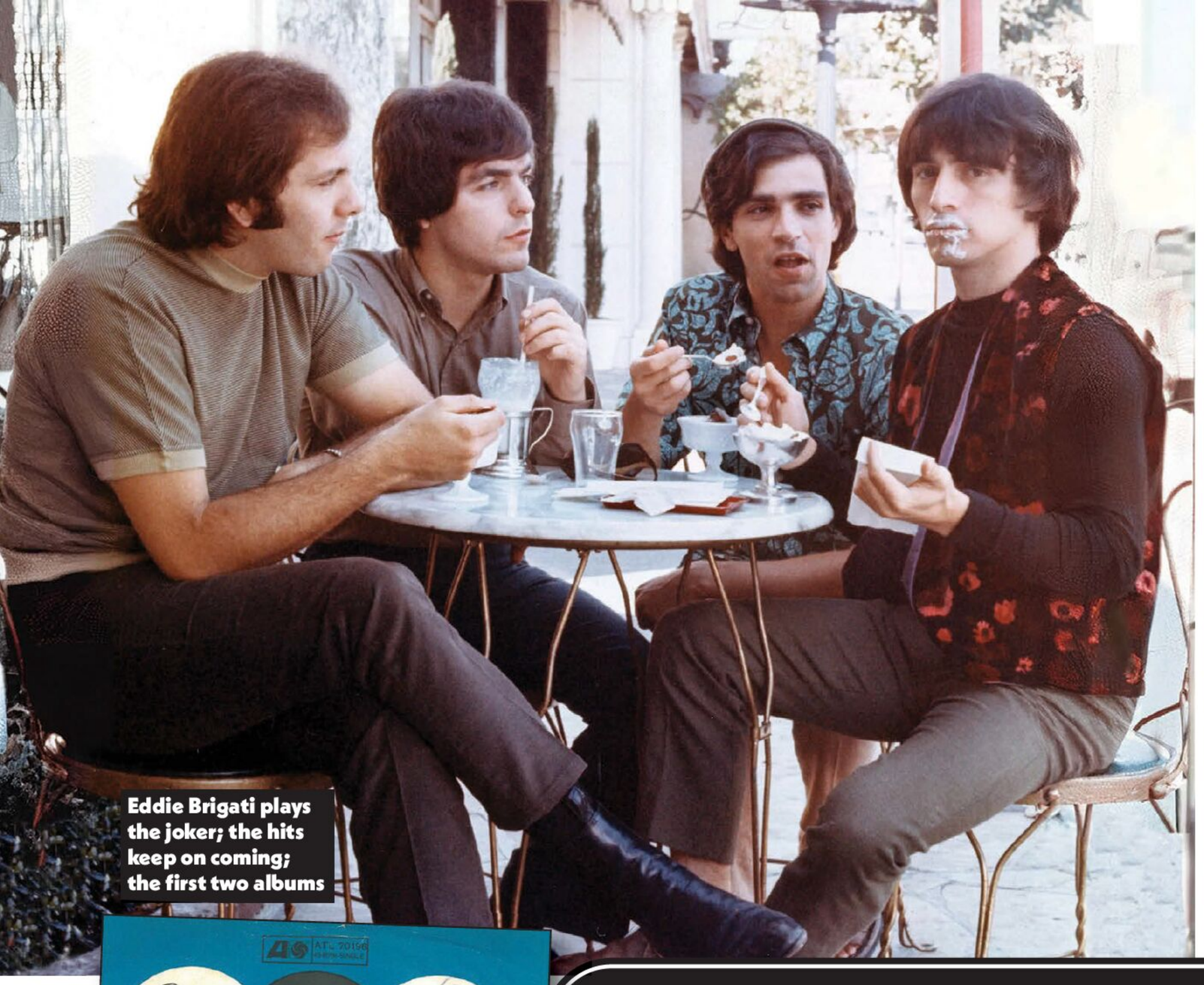
"I said, 'Look, this is it – if we can do this gig out here, we're going to get discovered,'" says Cavaliere. "And that's exactly what happened. This gentleman came in. He was a textile manufacturer. His name was Walter Hyman. He immediately called his friend Sid Bernstein, who signed us up immediately." Among other achievements, Bernstein was the man who changed the financial model of the live music industry by putting The Beatles into Shea Stadium. "Immediately our salary doubled and we started to attract the attention of record companies."

"Atlantic used to take our songs that we did in the clubs and give them to Wilson Pickett. We had 'Mustang Sally' before he did. We had 'Land Of 1000 Dances' before he did"

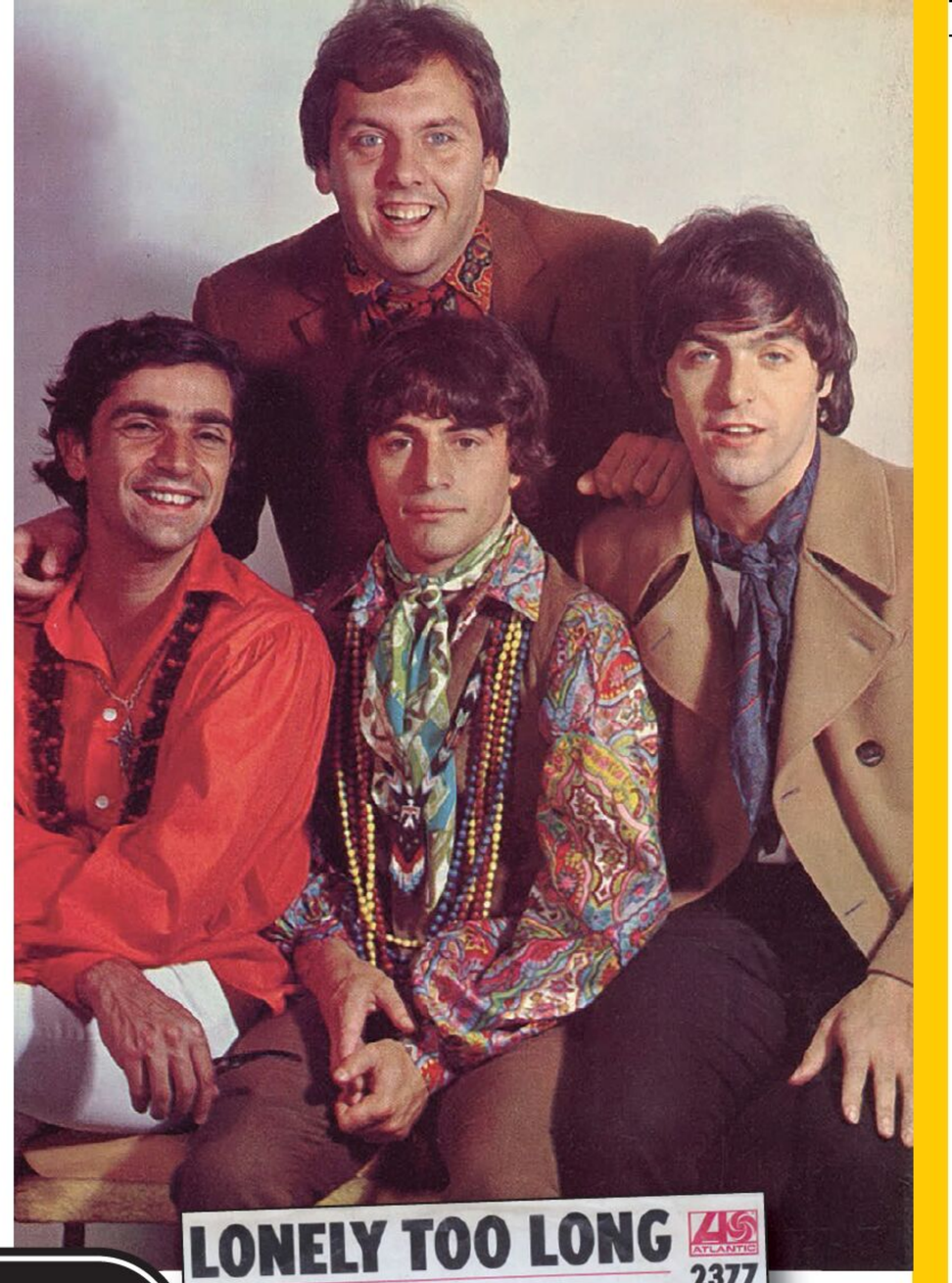
Of the several major labels who courted them, The Rascals opted for Atlantic, primarily because they were prepared to make jaw-dropping contractual concessions: the right to produce themselves, recording costs not recoupable against royalties and the artists having final say on releases, which, unprecedentedly for a white act, appeared not on subsidiary Atco but the main Atlantic label. "Atlantic was a small R&B, Black label," Cavaliere explains of the collective largesse. "They were interested in getting involved with the pop music at the time. We were a ticket to that world."

Despite The Rascals having control in the studio, Cavaliere acknowledges that their engineers – no less than Tom Dowd and a young Arif Mardin – were crucial. "They took what you were doing to a different level without losing what you were doing."

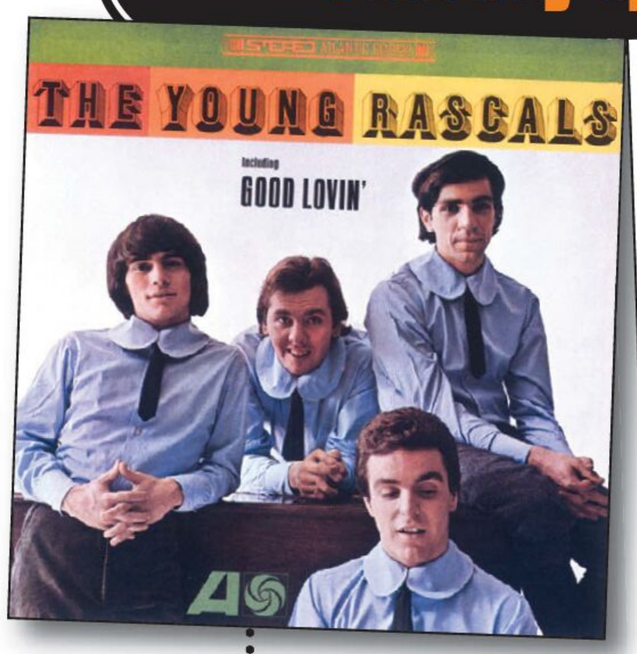
The group's '66 debut album was eponymous, but the titular name had changed. Cavaliere: "We got a call from our manager who said, 'Lads, we ran into a little difficulty. The name Rascals has been copyrighted by a group called The Harmonica Rascals.' So our manager took the liberty of putting on the record 'The Young Rascals'. From day one, I hated it." The LP found the rechristened band breathing new life into mildly familiar material and hoary old chestnut alike with a punky energy that was shot through with Cavaliere's Hammond B-3 organ explorations. Two of the new songs were provided by the staff composing team of Pam Sawyer and Lori Burton, and their 'Baby Let's Wait' made that obvious in its stated determination to hang onto singledom (and implicitly virginity and reputation) until the time was right. The same pair's anguished 'I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore' was more appropriate for a male band and had been the group's debut single and a bubbling-under hit. 'Do You Feel It' was the track that pointed the way to the self-reliance that would underpin the band's subsequent

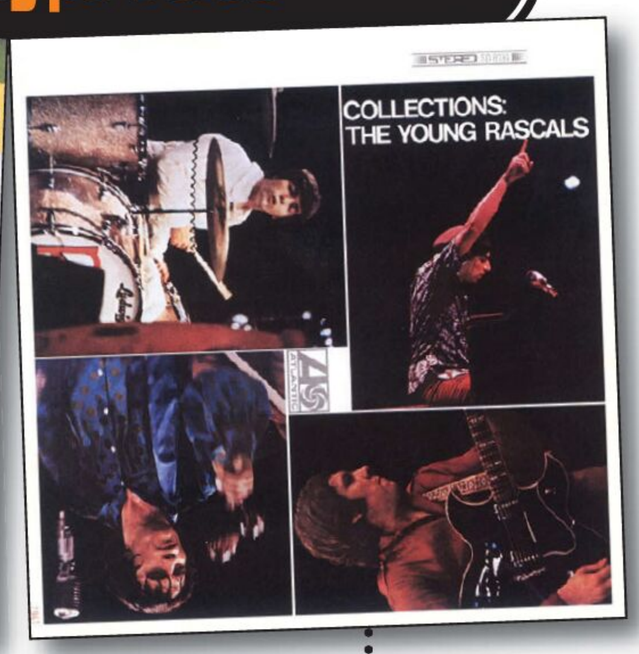


Eddie Brigati plays the joker; the hits keep on coming; the first two albums



"When we did something more gritty, Eddie didn't take to that too much. When I did 'How Can I Be Sure', I knew it was for him because he had that lovely choirboy type voice"





success, even if its Cavaliere/Cornish derivation was not the songwriting axis that would flourish. A more dubious tradition begun by the record was a cover of a decidedly un-soulful oldie, in this case the old Frankie Laine hit 'I Believe': Brigati loved to wrap his tonsils around such antediluvian, saccharine fare.

There was no doubting the grittiness, though, of the joyous, breakneck 'Good Lovin''. A Rudy Clark song originally recorded by Lemme B Good, it had been so comprehensively retooled by Artie Resnick for The Olympics that it justified his name being added to the publishing attribution. The Rascals did their own retooling, speeding it up and swapping horn charts for percolating organ runs, and were rewarded with a spring '66 *Billboard* #1.

It was fare like the latter that made many – including, handily, Black radio stations – assume that this all-Caucasian, three-quarters Italian-American band was in fact African-American. They were paid the ultimate compliment at the Atlantic studios one day by soul man and labelmate Otis Redding. "He stuffed his head in the room and he said, 'My God, they *are* white!'" recalls Cavaliere.

The fertilisation went both ways, though. "Atlantic used to take our songs that we did in the clubs and give them to Wilson Pickett," says Cavaliere. Mentioning two numbers from the debut, he notes, "We had 'Mustang Sally' before he did. We had 'Land Of 1000 Dances' before he did. Our set became singles for Wilson." It was a desire to cross over to Black audiences that shortly caused The Rascals to insist on at least one Black support act at their gigs. "Never thinking of the problems it would create," says Cavaliere. "A lot of people said, 'Okay, well, we're not going to hire them at all.'" Not that self-interest alone motivated them in this area: the band refused to play to segregated audiences and would briskly turn down a lucrative South African tour.

That The Swinging Blue Jeans and Brian Poole & The Tremeloes queered their pitch by beating them to the punch with British releases of 'Good Lovin'' was an augury for Rascals fortunes in this country. Although everybody in Blighty knows 'Groovin'', it was their only Top 10 success here, with 'A Girl Like You' their only other UK Top 40 entry.

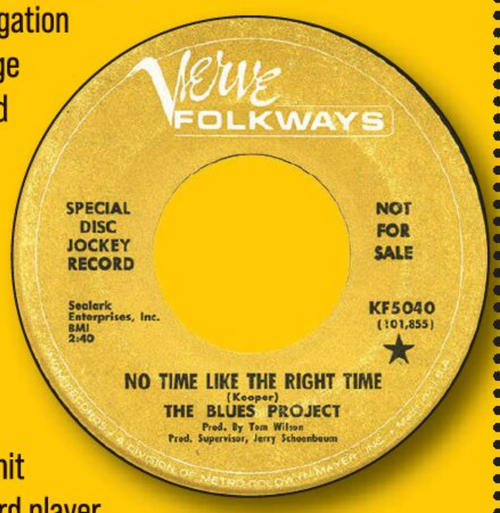
The follow-up to 'Good Lovin'' was the defiant Brigati/Cavaliere composed 'You Better Run'. It didn't match the success of its predecessor but proved they could make the US Top 20 with their own material and the two flatmates continued the collaboration. It was a move that Atlantic – who must have originally thought they were signing a covers band – did not resist. Cavaliere: "'Give me a hit, man' – that's all they care about." He adds, "Don't forget, Arif was on their

Come On Down

The mean streets, mob connections and blue-eyed soul/R&B tendencies of the New York music scene were never synonymous with The Summer Of Love. Nevertheless, here are five sizzling NYC 45s from 1967

The Blues Project
No Time Like The Right Time
(Verve Folkways, February 1967)

This volatile aggregation of Greenwich Village folkies synthesised a tantalising blend of rock, blues and proto-psychedelic improvisation on November 1966's Projections before scoring their only hit (#96) with keyboard player Al Kooper's 'No Time Is The Right Time', immortalised on Side One of *Nuggets*. Despite the opening applause, it's a studio recording, one of their last before falling apart in spring '67. Kooper formed Blood, Sweat & Tears; a modified line-up of The Blues Project reunited for three albums in the early '70s.



The Vagrants
I Love, Love You (Yes I Do)
(Atco, March 1967)

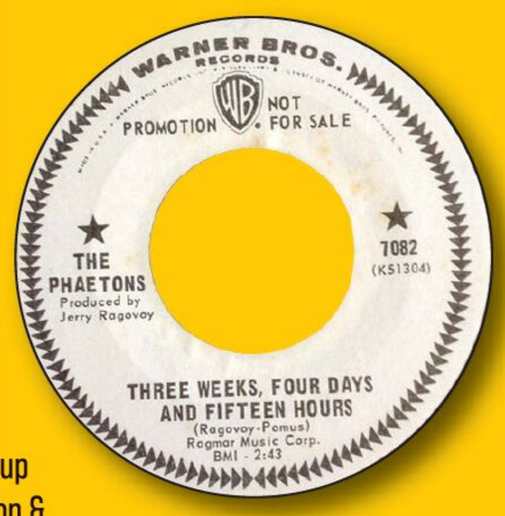
While 'Respect' – this single's flipside, a minor east coast hit and Nuggets neighbour of the above – has become The Vagrants' calling card, it's 'I Love, Love You' that showcases the Long Island group's blue-eyed soul chops. Produced by Dave Brigati (brother of The Rascals' Eddie) and Larry Vernieri for Shadow Morton's Phantom Productions, it marked the end of their soul flirtation, with final two singles, written by Left Banke associate Bert Sommer, venturing into moody rock territory.

The Vanilla Fudge
You Keep Me Hanging On
(Atco, June 1967)

Leaning heavily into The Young Rascals' organ-dominated soulful rock sound (Mark Stein and Tim Bogert formed the band after witnessing a Rascals show in '65), when Long Island quartet The Pigeons (name change insisted upon by Atlantic/Atco's Ahmet Ertegun) turned up the heat under their dramatic reworking of The Supremes' late 1966 #1, they ushered in an entirely new wave of rock music. Edited down for release as their debut single, it hit #6. It's become mired in cliché during the intervening 57 years but must have sounded like nothing on earth at the time.

The Phaetons
Three Weeks, Four Days And Fifteen Hours
(Warner Bros, October 1967)

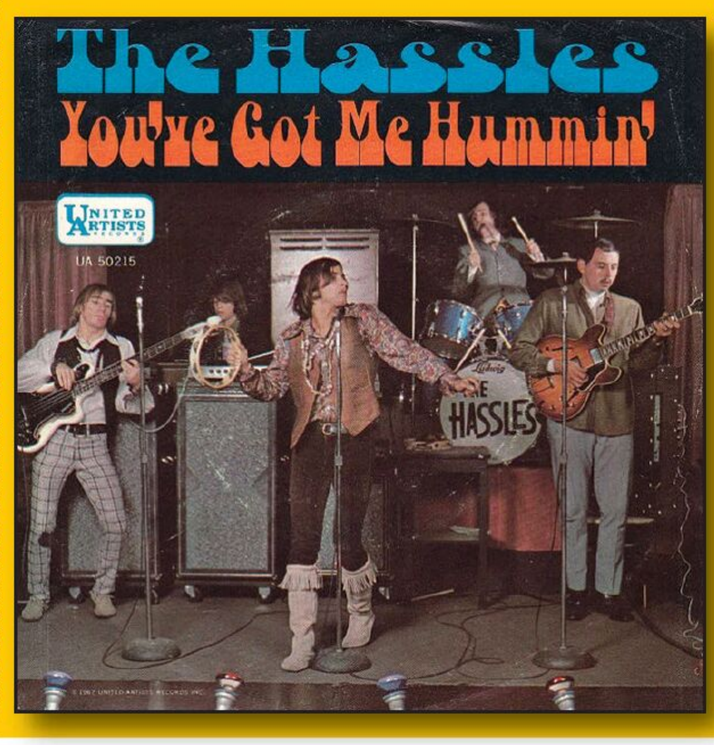
Another Long Island act, The Phaetons mined a more harmony-rich seam of blue-eyed soul/pop. Their three Warners singles were helmed by storied writer/producer Jerry Ragovoy and co-written by Ragovoy and Doc Pomus, their personnel included future 'New York, New York (So Good They Named It Twice)' man Gerard Kenny and they reportedly played back-up to Chuck Berry and Simon & Garfunkel. Despite such credentials, The Phaetons' story remains a mystery and their compilation appearances limited to bootlegs and fan-circulated jukebox CDs.



The Hassles
You've Got Me Hummin'
(United Artists, October 1967)

Best remembered for launching the recording career of one William Joel, Long Island quintet The Hassles were a popular live draw, blending a dramatic stage show and amped-up covers of soul and rock tunes, as captured on this high-octane reading of Sam & Dave's 1966 hit which almost cracked the *Billboard* Top 100. Joel clearly had a soft spot for the song, including a live version on the B-side of his soul-indebted '83 #1 'Tell Her About It'.

Andy Morten



staff as an A&R man, so when he started to hear the songs that were being written, I'm sure that was reported immediately: 'These guys are onto something'."

Of the Brigati/Cavaliere partnership process, the latter says, "I basically wrote all the choruses, the titles, the music. I needed help with the verses. I felt that his repartee with lyrics was a little bit more flowery than mine, that mine may have been a little bit too serious, a little bit too realistic." Brigati would throw more flowery verses at Cavaliere than he knew what to do with. "I basically edited his work."

As if to prove lead vocals was not necessarily an either/or proposition, Brigati and Cavaliere traded lines sweetly on 'Love Is A Beautiful Thing' on second album *Collections* (January '67), a strong set of which more than half was original.

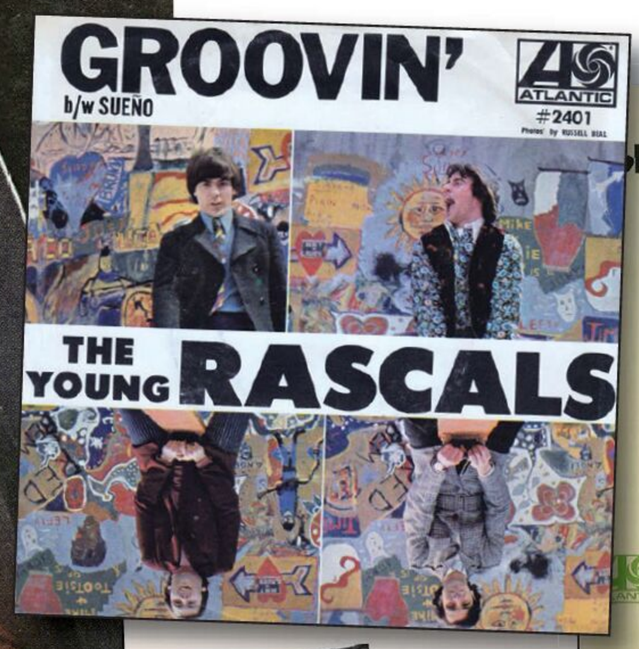
Something lost in the cracks of history and not easily discernible from simply listening to their corpus is the more local cross-fertilisation in which The Rascals were engaged. They were unusual in being an East Coast band, with The Lovin' Spoonful their only real contemporaries in that regard, and it was in Long Island, NY that they had a major impact, them exemplifying the mix of organ-heavy, harmonies-draped soul and rock that predominated in that region in the second half of the '60s. Similar local bands were Leslie West's Vagrants, Billy Joel's Hassles and, most notably, Vanilla Fudge.

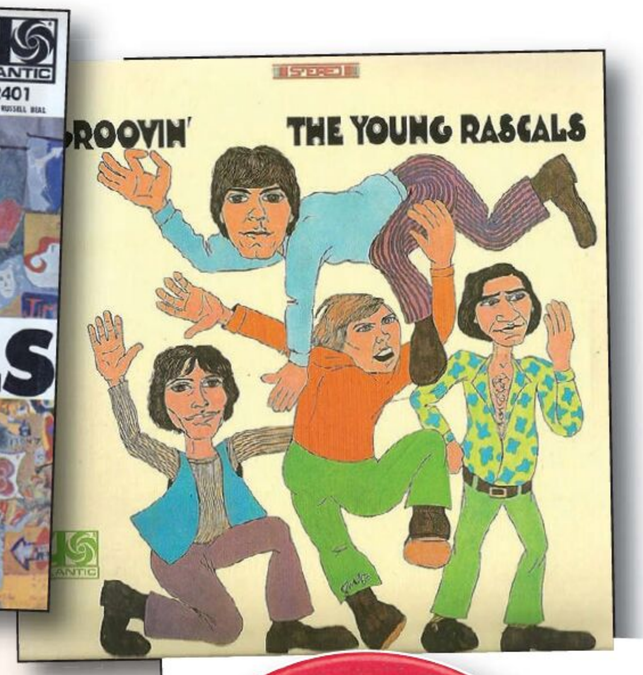
July's *Groovin'* was The Young Rascals' second album of '67. Its cover depicted the band in cartoon form but the contents more closely resembled an oil painting, finding their sound fleshed out by horns, flute and an increasingly sophisticated production. There was now also a dedicated bassist in the building, something dictated by the fact that the industry's switchover from mono to stereo meant that both the foot pedals of Cavaliere's Hammond and Cornish's bass overdubs would no longer do. Mardin suggested employing Black bassist Chuck Rainey, whose CV would in time include everyone from Aretha Franklin to Louis Armstrong to Steely Dan.

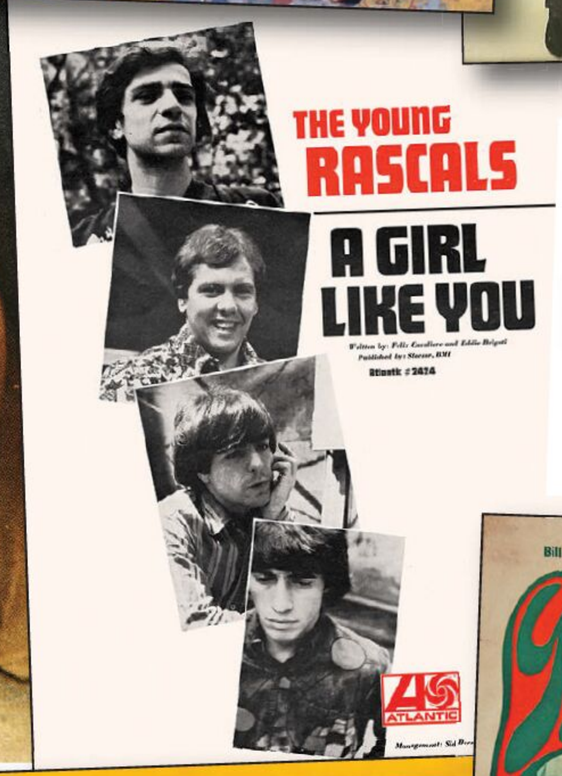
Meanwhile the quality of the songwriting – all in-house with the exception of one cover – was transcendent. While it resembled the just-released *Sgt Pepper* in several ways, the album aped *Revolver* in triumphantly opening with a trio of songs that successively displayed the talents of the three frontline members: Cavaliere handled vocal duties on the sprightly, worshipful 'A Girl Like You', Brigati on the haunting, eastern-inflected 'Find Somebody' and Cornish on his own sweetly rapturous 'I'm So Happy Now'. That was only the start of the record's compositional strengths.

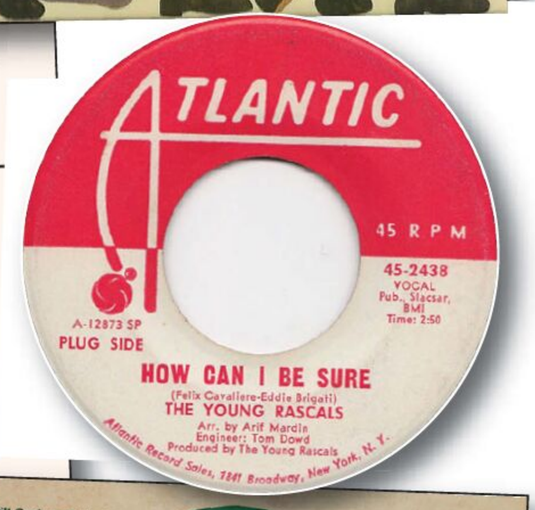
With 'I Don't Love You Anymore' Cornish came up with another pop gem, this one as bitter as 'I'm So Happy Now' was blissed-out. 'How Can I Be Sure' was a lilting anthem of uncertainty set to waltz time written by Brigati and Cavaliere but always destined to be sung by the former. "When we did something more gritty, he didn't take to that too much," says Cavaliere. "When I did 'How Can I Be Sure', I knew it was for him because he had that lovely choirboy type voice."

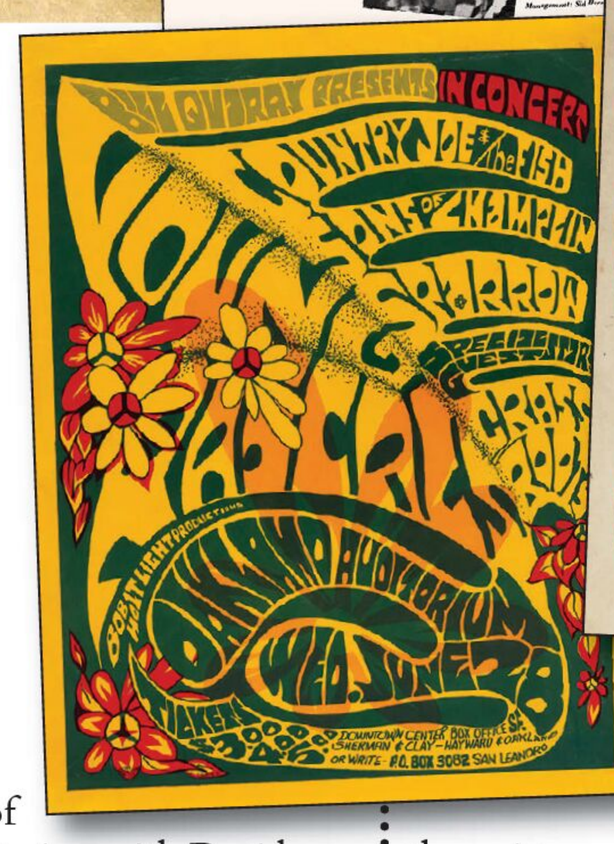
The highlight, though, was the immortal title track. Despite the air of post-coital languor of a Sabbath, Cavaliere says, "It wasn't necessarily sex. Musicians work basically on Fridays and Saturdays

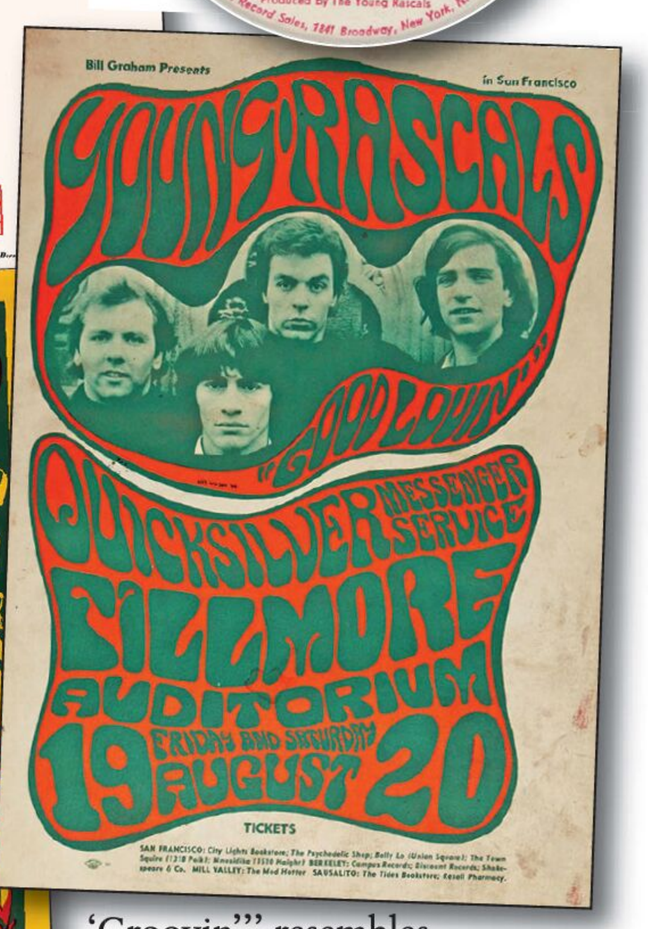












Embracing the bells and beads of 1967; second chart-topper 'Groovin'' and accompanying album; press ad; 'How Can I Be Sure' becomes another standard; psychedelia beckons

and you have to find a female that liked that idea. It really helps a lot to let them know there's a special day for them." It's all exquisitely underpinned by a languid piano line, fluttering harmonica and pulsing congas and garnished with frilly harmonies and birdsong. The avian sounds are not real but the handiwork of Brigati and his brother David. The latter was an ex-Starlighter who would be an increasing presence at Rascals sessions, lending powerful sibling harmonising to the vocal blend and even taking lead vocals on the track 'Once Upon A Dream'. He also – uncredited and unbeknownst to the others – provided his brother assistance with his lyrics.

The band's fourth single 'Come On Up' had flopped and while 'I've Been Lonely Too Long' had hit #16 they hadn't repeated their initial chart success. That all changed as Atlantic milked an album whose every track sounded like a smash, starting with the fact that they threw on 'You Better Run' after it had failed to make the second album. 'A Girl Like You' was a #10, 'How Can I Be Sure' a #4. Then there was the title track.

Of what is now The Rascals' most famous song, Cavaliere reveals, "Jerry Wexler, who was vice-president of Atlantic at the time, didn't want that released. He said, 'Wait a second, I thought you guys were a rock 'n' roll band. Where's the drum?'" Luckily, famed Big Apple deejay Murray The K intervened. Cavaliere: "He said, 'Hey Jerry, let me tell you something, man. I'll put that song on the radio today.' Kind of changed his mind. Sure enough, it was #1 in New York for six weeks." We can attribute its wider national success – it enjoyed a four-week run at the top of the *Billboard* chart – to the fact that its musical excellence was bolstered by the coincidence that its sun-dappled joyfulness happened to chime perfectly with the mood of The Summer Of Love.

Such was its power that the album has reverberated down the decades, starting later in '67 with Booker T & The MGs' US Top 30 instrumental cover of 'Groovin'' and continuing with David Cassidy's version of 'How Can I Be Sure' going to the top in Britain in '72 and a Pat Benatar revival of 'You Better Run' that scraped the US Top 40 in '80.

The band had ditched their "knickers" at the beginning of '67 after noticing on a Brooklyn Paramount package show that they left the largely Black audience unimpressed. The growing-up process continued when the November '67 single 'It's Wonderful' (*Billboard* #20) marked the milestone of the last record credited to The Young Rascals. "I said, 'To hell with this, man, we're claiming the name,'" says Cavaliere. "We changed it back." Happily, The Harmonica Rascals failed to serve a writ.

Embarrassment at their juvenile-sounding name was one of several remarkable parallels between The Rascals and their exact contemporaries The Small Faces. The others included the contrast of the diminutive height and bigger-than-life vocals of the lead singer, swooping runs on Hammond B-3 organ, the way 'Groovin'' resembles 'Lazy Sunday' in celebrating heavenly Sabbath downtime with the assistance of atmospheric sound effects, and the fact that neither band's success travelled consistently across the Atlantic.

The major reason that The Rascals seem the American bookend to The Small Faces though, is that both ensembles started as soul-pop merchants but quickly morphed into something far more exotic. The band that would henceforth be known once more as The Rascals were about to embark on a wholesale reinvention that would produce very different soundscapes but ones just as galvanizing and ground-breaking. S!

People Got To Be Free!
Part two of our Rascals story follows next month

It's Wonderful: The Complete Atlantic Studio Recordings is out now on Now Sounds
Then And Now by Felix Cavaliere is available from

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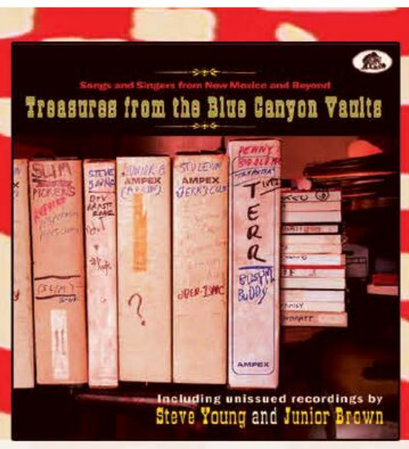
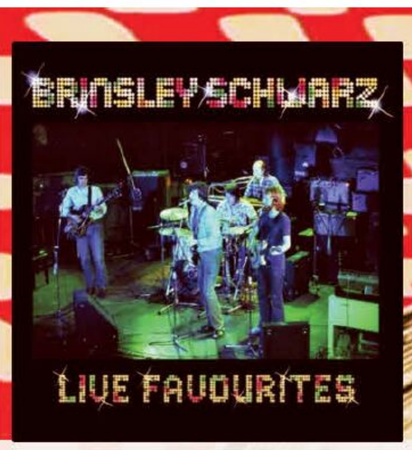


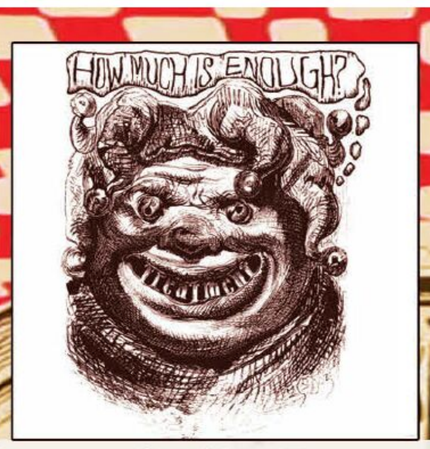
VARIOUS
TREASURES FROM THE BLUE CANYON VAULTS
BEAR FAMILY

Recordings from 1970 to 2022, singer/songwriter, folk and country music - some released here for the first time, including tunes by the great Steve Young and alternative country superstar Junior Brown! *includes 24 page booklet.



BRINSLEY SCHWARZ
LIVE FAVOURITES
VOGON

New Limited Edition on Red Vinyl. Live Favourites was recorded just after the band recorded their Dave Edmunds-produced swansong New Favourites.

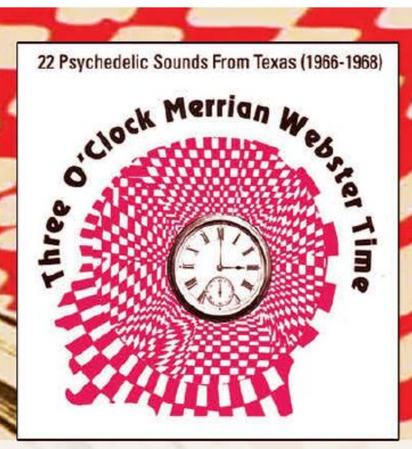


TREATMENT
HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?
TREATMENT RECORDS

True Acid Wizards of the 1980s/1990s Psychedelic Underground Now, 20 years after it was recorded, a limited-edition 2LP of their second studio album In memory of guitarist Gordon Leach who sadly passed away in 2021. 300 copies only.

ZU
CARBONIFEROUS
SUBSOUND

Ltd splatter vinyl with new artwork
Their masterpiece, orig. released on Ipecac in 2009, it includes collaborations with Mike Patton, King Buzzo, Giulio Ragno Favero.
Experimental amalgam of metal, math, no-wave.

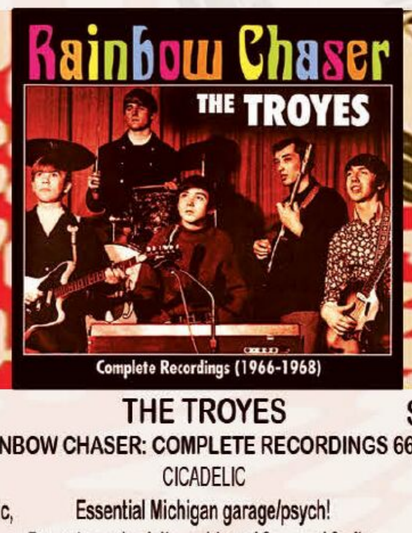


VARIOUS
THREE O CLOCK MERRIAN WEBSTER TIME
TEXAS PSYCHEDELIC BANDS 1966-1968
CICADELIC

Twenty-two tracks compiling the changes that occurred from late 1966 to 1968, when the Texas bands went, metaphorically speaking from "Kool-Aid" to "Electric Kool-Aid Acid".

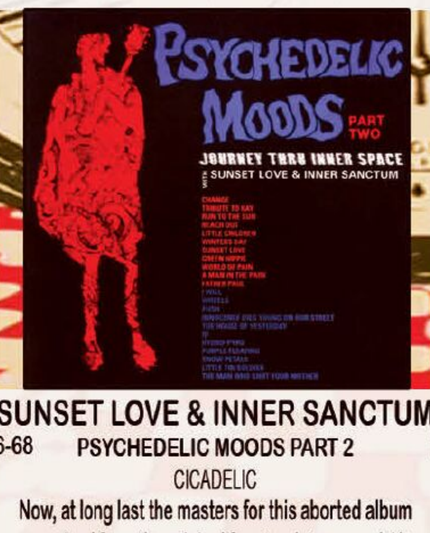
WARD WHITE
HERE COME THE DOWSERS!
THINK LIKE A KEY

Garnering comparisons to the likes of Bowie, Roxy Music, Neil Hannon & Elvis Costello, White's "Soaring, lyrical pop" (The New Yorker) is in full bloom, "creating something singular and compelling" (MAGNET).



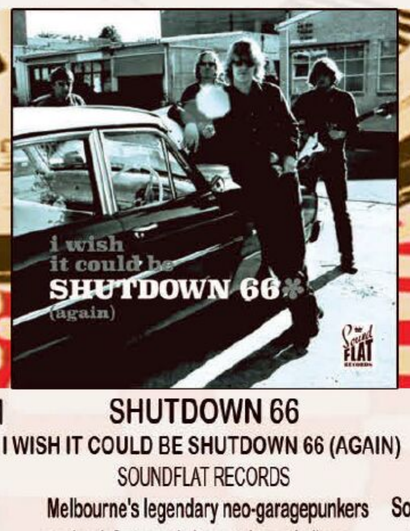
THE TROYES
RAINBOW CHASER: COMPLETE RECORDINGS 66-68
CICADELIC

Essential Michigan garage/psych! Far-out psychedelia, unhinged fuzz and farfisa garage, moody haunting sounds, face melters -it's all here. "Essential? You bet." -Shindig!



SUNSET LOVE & INNER SANCTUM
PSYCHEDELIC MOODS PART 2
CICADELIC

Now, at long last the masters for this aborted album are mixed from the original four track tapes and 40+ years later the psychedelic sounds of "Inner Sanctum" are now available on Limited CD.



SHUTDOWN 66
I WISH IT COULD BE SHUTDOWN 66 (AGAIN)
SOUNDFLAT RECORDS

Melbourne's legendary neo-garagepunkers are back for more! An unreleased album, recorded by the original line up of Australia's garage punk gods. Limited Edition Vinyl.

VARIOUS
LIVE IT UP OST
TROPHY RECORDS

Soundtrack to a 60s movie released for the first time ever. Taken from the legendary Joe Meek Tea Chest tapes Contains a previously unreleased Gene Vincent track. All written and produced by Joe Meek.

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Picture Book

It's **MARGO GURYAN**'s turn to take her place in the spotlight. What took so long? wonders **CHRIS TWOMEY**

MARGO GURYAN
Words & Music
★★★★★
NUMERO GROUP 3-LP BOX SET

It might be tempting to categorise Margo Guryan as yet another artist who unfairly slipped through the net during her years of peak activity, but, in many ways, she was the author of her own mixed fortunes. Born and bred in Queens, NY, Margo was a precocious musical talent, learning to play piano at just six years old. By the time she hit university age, she was already an accomplished jazz performer and composer, who went on to achieve considerable acclaim, if not commercial success, when she switched allegiance to pop music.

But hey, enough of the biographical stuff for now (you'll find a fine resume of her career elsewhere in this issue), let's focus on the music: which is where you begin to understand why Margo Guryan had a lot of people scratching their heads. In the '50s she was a jazz aficionado who didn't really give a fig about the newly emerging rock 'n' pop fad. It seemed quite primitive and superficial to her. She wanted to write songs that honoured her primary musical influences and, after numerous encounters with the likes of bebop pioneer Max Roach, who became her friend and mentor, she was eventually signed to Atlantic Records.

It didn't go well because Margo didn't want to be a performer, believing her voice wasn't strong enough, so Atlantic drew up a songwriter contract instead. Her first taste of success came when Chris Connor covered trippy sci-fi fantasy 'Moon Ride' in 1958. Margo's previously unheard '56 demo is included in this lavish box set, a career-spanning anthology which features a 32-page booklet and, for the early birds, a limited-edition bonus 10-inch disc of Margo's super-rare *Chopsticks Variations*.

The first album contains many previously unreleased classy and soulful (and of course jazzy) demos recorded during Guryan's Atlantic period, some covered by the likes of Harry Belafonte and Miriam Makeba.

Things get more interesting on the second disc, which contains a mixture of demos and masters for her only official album, '68's baroque/sunshine-pop classic *Take A Picture*. Although critically lauded upon release, it bombed, mainly because of Margo's reticence to perform live. Her then-label Bell quickly pulled the plug, even though she'd already written a *bona fide* smash in 'Sunday Mornin'', first a Top 30 hit for soft-rockers Spanky & Our Gang, then a Glen Campbell/Bobbie Gentry duet, with dozens more covers to follow. Famously, she fell in love with what we now call chamber-pop when a friend played her 'God Only Knows' for the first time. Enthralled not just by the melody, but also Brian Wilson's unconventional phrasing and time structures, she immediately wrote the gorgeously evocative 'Think Of Rain', quickly followed by a dozen other romance-inspired songs that fulfilled her newfound "kid-in-a-toyshop" realisation that pop was full of limitless possibilities, even for a classically/jazz trained musician. Even better, it suited her sweet, breathy "little girl lost" voice far more than the gutsier jazz idiom.

If only the public hadn't had to wait three decades for *Take A Picture's* re-release, resulting in (very) belated appreciation. What stands out about this collection – which culminates with the substantial body of work she demoed long after her "failed" pop career, right up to her death in 2021 – is the amazingly high quality of these early recordings. It's rare for demos to come anywhere near the fully realised final product. Yet in many cases, these versions are better arranged, sonically more pleasing or swing harder than the released versions.

Margo never wished to play by the rules of the music industry. Turns out she didn't need to. She had enough class to find immortality through word of mouth.

"'Think Of Rain' was quickly followed by a dozen other romance-inspired songs that fulfilled her newfound 'kid-in-a-toyshop' realisation that pop was full of limitless possibilities"

Margo Guryan recording *Take A Picture* in Columbia's Studio B, NYC, 1968

THE BINGS
Power Pop Planet (The Lost Tapes)
★★★★

BACHELOR LP

No album is ever truly lost, it seems. It's just left on a shelf, ripe for rediscovery 40 years later. So it is with *Power Pop Planet*, the one-and-only platter from LA-based The Bings, recorded in the early '80s but unreleased until now.

Anyone calling their album *Power Pop Planet* better have the chops to deliver their double-P stuff on a spherical sun-orbiting scale, and this The Bings do. With the exception of the Brian Wilson-indebted 'Just A Child', the songs are a subtle blend of British Invasion influences and the band's '70s powerpop forerunners, all tied up with the polished production of near contemporaries The Cars and The Knack. 'Go Bye-Bye' strays too close to "What if Freddie & The Dreamers came from Nashville" territory for my liking, but otherwise this is miles above other recently recovered artifacts from Trizo 50 and Fantasy Train. Why it never found a label is a mystery.

Peter Gallagher

ANNE BRIGGS
Anne Briggs
★★★★★

TOPIC LP+45

Briggs' debut album has been reissued several times since its 1971 release, but the USP this time round is a bonus seven-inch vinyl featuring four previously unreleased cuts rescued from "The Lost Tape". It contains traditional songs 'Sovay', 'The Cruel Mother', 'Bruton Town' and 'Three Maidens A-Milking Did Go', all mastered by Calum Malcolm, with Briggs herself providing sleeve notes.

The album itself is also remastered. Featuring gold standard versions of 'Blackwater Side', 'Reynardine' and 'Wille o Winsbury' plus Anne's own songs 'Go Your Way' and 'Living By The Water', the album was something of a throwback given the advancements in studio technology at the time – no big productions or baroque adornments here, just voice, guitar or bouzouki. It's an essential collection for anyone with even a passing interest in British Isles folk. A timeless record capable of leaving the listener with a meditative calmness long after the needle has left the groove.

Duncan Fletcher

BRINSLEY SCHWARZ
Last Orders!
★★★

MEGA DODO LP

Underrated journeymen of '70s British rock, Brinsley Schwarz still enjoy a loyal cult following, hence this limited vinyl reissue of singer Ian Gomm's second collection of band rarities, which misses three songs from the 2021 CD version, but which will still doubtless sell out its run of just 300 copies.

Opening instrumental 'Seymour (I Love You)' owes as much to Hank Marvin as The Meters and Booker T, while 'Funk Angel', a standout from sophomore LP *Despite It All*, is taken here at breakneck pace. Out-takes from '72 follow-up *Silver Pistol* (Gomm's first with the band) are pleasant but inessential appropriations of the Burritos and The Band, but alternate readings of 'Unknown Number' and 'Range War' show Nick Lowe and Gomm each finding their own distinctive voices. Aimed at completists rather than casual listeners, only a lack of sleeve notes (no sources, dates or even writing credits) mars this selection.

Ben Graham

LISTEN TO THE
SHINDIG!
BROADCAST
ON MIXCLOUD

Cluster. Hauntological krautrock?

Teutonic Water

CAN
Live In Aston 1977
★★★★

MUTE/FUTURE DAYS CD/LP

Another addition to the Can *Live* series and I, for one, am not complaining. The latest release *Live In Aston 1977* sees the German outfit performing in the heart of the UK midlands, not long after the release of their seventh album *Saw Delight*. But while previous entry *Live In Paris 1973* release saw the band at the height of their powers, four years later, the cracks were beginning to show.

There had already been some line-up changes. Vocalist Damo Suzuki was gone, while Traffic bassist Rosko Gee had come onboard leaving Holger Czukay to shift over to "waveform radio and spec sounds". But let's be clear, the quality of their performance is still incredible. As with other editions, *Live In Aston 1977* is comprised of four untitled tracks as the band improvise around familiar hooks. There are snippets of 'Vitamin C', 'Pinch' and 'Dizzy Dizzy', but don't trouble yourself trying to decipher individual songs, just lap up the brilliance.

Sarah Gregory

CLUSTER
Zuckerzeit
★★★★★

BUREAU B LP

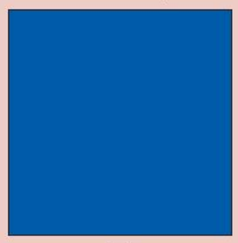
The "sugar era" of Cluster began with Roedelius and Moebius settling in the Forst countryside, experimenting with their Harmonia partner Michael Rother's equipment, focusing on rhythms, sketching solitary vignettes and later collaging them onto their shape-shifting third full-length.

The result was 1974's *Zuckerzeit*, a record that moved on from the lengthy explorations of previous kosmische offerings and inventively flirted with pop, seeming economical upon its surface and richly textured (and prescient) in its details. Some tracks capture the moment when krautrock reached out to the hauntology to come, while 'Rosa' paves the way for Boards Of Canada. Reading "50th Anniversary Edition" attached to the latest reissue of the album, you may experience some dizziness. And it's not because of some trite "Oh, how time flies" outburst of nostalgia. The reason is, in fact, even simpler: as much as '74 feels perfectly distant, *Zuckerzeit* still sounds like the future.

Camilla Aisa

CONRAD SCHNITZLER
Blau
★★★★

BUREAU B CD/LP



Having waxed lyrical about bureau b's superlative krautrock releases over the recent months, they've gone and done it again – this time with the 50th anniversary reissue of Conrad Schnitzler's *Blau*.

Schnitzler is another of those key figures who repeatedly pushed the boundaries of German electronic music in the golden era that stretched from the late '60s to the mid-70s. One of the original stock, Schnitzler founded The Zodiak Free Arts Lab in Berlin, the hub of the German *avant-garde* and testament to his centrality to the movement in those early years was a member of both Tangerine Dream and Kluster (with Moebius and Roedelius) before they became a duo. *Blau* is Schnitzler's sophomore solo album – a two-track electronica voyage inspired by Bauhaus' Joseph Beuys that thrills in its experimentation as he pushes the synthesiser to its limits. A relatively challenging listen – this still sounds fresh 50 years on. Ground-breaking.

Sarah Gregory

reviews then

BROOKLYN SOUNDS
Brooklyn Sounds!
★★★★

VAMPISOUL LP

Nu Yorican "garage salsa" ensemble Brooklyn Sounds' self-titled 1971 debut has acquired legendary status among collectors because of its rarity, the authentically raw, free-flowing quality of the performances and the incredible back story of how the album came into being. Discovered by would-be producer Bobby Marin as La Orquesta Tropical, Marin attempted to secure a recording deal for the unknown band but was ultimately unsuccessful due to the projected cost and the unpolished sound of their audition tape.

Undaunted, Marin persuaded the band to change their name to Brooklyn Sounds so the label wouldn't realise this was the same band they'd previously turned down. Marin then borrowed the keys to a local studio he'd been overseeing another session in, and the band recorded the album on the fly overnight. *Brooklyn Sounds!* survives as audible proof that sometimes working in less-than-ideal conditions can produce outstanding results.

Grahame Bent

WILBURN BURCHETTE
Opens The Seven Gates Of Transcendental Consciousness
★★★★

NUMERO GROUP LP

A fascinating character, autodidact musician and mystic, Wilburn Burchette recorded and self-released seven albums of new age electric guitar experimentations in the mid-70s, of which this is the best-known – yet still long overdue for a full official reissue.

Its seven tracks – one to open each gate – combine modal plainchant motifs and baroque electric guitar flourishes over occasionally folky structures, and some modulating organic sounds that wouldn't sound out of place emanating from Bebe and Louis and Barron's studio two decades earlier. Whether it all quite lives up to Burchette's lofty transcendental intentions is, as with all things of this nature, a deeply personal consideration – yet his written guide to using the set in your meditations is charmingly accessible. Indeed, *Seven Gates...* is specifically designed to be experienced as a combination of music, poetry and Caren Caraway's lovely paintings, reproduced in all their colourful glory in the booklet accompanying this disc.

Christopher Budd

GENE CLARK
The Lost Studio Sessions 1964-1982
★★★★

LIBERATION HALL/SIERRA 2-CD/2-LP

Sierra's wide-spanning collection in 2018 of lost Gene Clark studio recordings makes a welcome return on CD (and on limited edition RSD vinyl). Richly annotated by a phalanx of Clark-heads of note, the 24 tracks span endearing, warbly 1964 solo acoustic demos to tracks from original Byrds manager Jim Dickson's '82 attempt at a Byrds/Burritos supergroup, Niteflyte.

Obvious highlights are lost '67 baroque-pop epic 'Back Street Mirror', and a cool '70 remake of Dillard & Clark's 'She Darked The Sun'. Backed by The Flying Burrito Brothers (with Chris Hillman, Michael Clarke and Gram all still on board) on the latter, it's an early, deliberate stab at a backdoor Byrds reunion orchestrated by Jim Dickson – with a clonking '65 Crosby-ish rhythm guitar and spindly 12-string. The real meat of the collection is a clutch of rollicking *Roadmaster* out-takes, and best of all, seven stunning unheard *White Light*-era demos. Gene-ius.

Martin Ruddock

THE CLIQUE
Preservation Society
★★★★

DETOUR 3-LP BOX SET

Within London's mod scene during the late '80s and '90s, The Clique were undeniably ace faces. Their *Introducing* EP, with its faux-Who cover image, was one of the early line-up's major achievements, featuring a live-wire rendition of perennial freakbeat favourite 'Take Her Anytime'.

Yet, as attested by the six highly groovin' sides contained across this handsome vinyl box set, The Clique were also no slouches at penning their own creations. They hold their own whether throwing down basic R&B-fuelled beat or more psych-inspired considerations; each are as compelling as the other and the flow of quality rarely disappoints.

Full of gutsy vocals and slashing guitars, the set includes such stand-out favourites as 'Reggie' and 'The Quest'. The package is rounded out by a sprinkling of photos plus authentic recollections that speak of well-loved, occasionally riotous times. Will delight both die-hard Clique fans and new seekers of cool sounds.

Lenny Helsing

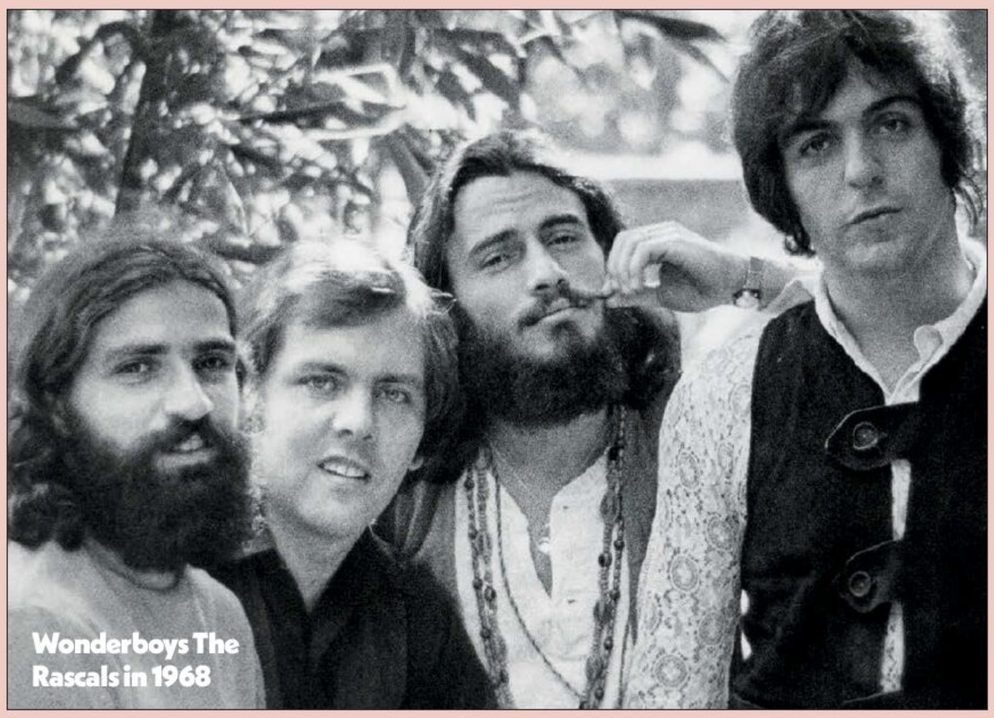
COLD SUN
Dark Shadows
★★★★

GUERSSEN LP

You could say this latest reissue of Cold Sun's *Dark Shadows* represents the return of the legendary forgotten Texan psych opus. Fronted by vocalist, auto-harpist and peyote freak Billy Bill Miller (who would later play a key role in Roky Erickson's return to music following his time at Rusk State Hospital), Cold Sun would later morph into Bleib Alien/The Aliens and feature as the resurgent Roky's backing band of choice.

Recorded in 1970 but unreleased at the time, *Dark Shadows* has been described as an "impossible meld" of the Elevators and The Velvet Underground and is, in its every fuzzed-out note, a mysterious and otherworldly trip to the outer limits of post-Elevators Austin mind music. Presented here with fully restored audio, newly-commissioned sleeve artwork and a detailed accompanying booklet, this definitive edition supersedes all previous (and long out of print) versions of this forgotten landmark.

Grahame Bent



Wonderboys The Rascals in 1968

Lost In A Dream

THE RASCALS
It's Wonderful: The Complete Atlantic Studio Recordings
★★★★★

NOW SOUNDS 7-CD BOX SET

Just the hits, right? That's all we care about? Right? Some overwhelmingly great singles and that's it? Tear off your own head if that's what you think, or just sit back and let these boys do it for you.

The (Young) Rascals were not a rock 'n' roll band from New York and New Jersey – they were a religion. There was nothing else like them, not ever. Many tried, some got close, most failed. Four white guys (one of them was *really* white) who had more soul in their outstretched pinky fingers than you could even imagine. And their LPs were a treasure trove of wonderment that completely belies their miscategorisation as a singles band. Just give one listen to 'Ready For Love', a deep cut from latter-day LP *Search And Nearness* (a record that criminally went straight into the dollar bins) and you will scream, "How could this not have been a hit?"

Hit? It wasn't even a *single*.

This exhaustive/exhausting seven-CD box set has everything the band cut for Atlantic Records, and then some. (You'll still need the two albums that were released on Columbia after The Rascals moved on.) You may recall that there have already been two major box set releases in 1992 and 2001, with the latter (6-CD collection *All I Really Need*) alleging to be the last word on the subject. Not so fast. This new seven-disc package has 152 tracks, stereo and mono, 14 of them previously unreleased. (Yes, some are alternate takes and rehearsal recordings, but some you've never heard before.) You also get 'Groovin'' in four different languages. And you didn't really need the full-length, unedited version of 'Mustang Sally' that you didn't even know about, right? Turns out you do. Oh, you do.

The remastered sound (courtesy of Alec Palao) is impeccable. Several tracks on the first two LPs suffered from distortion problems; much of that has been somewhat remedied. The mono and stereo versions of most of these songs are both well worth your time, with neither being the clear winner in many cases, and there's a 60-page book containing unseen photos and a 10,000-word essay by Richie Unterberger.

You've heard enough Henry Cow this week. Buy this.

Mike Fornatale

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

a cellarful of soul

PAUL RITCHIE hears David Essex, The Fall and bagpipes amongst a diverse range of soul and funk releases

Everyone is welcome at the *Shindig!* Soul & Funk Club but first, let's head back to the dawn of soul music. **RUTH BROWN** was an early R&B pioneer. Signed to Atlantic Records, she released her second LP **Miss Rhythm** (★★★, PURE PLEASURE LP) in 1959. Her voluminous vocal could shift from raucous to suave in a heartbeat. There's a cheekiness evident on good time rockers like 'Just Too Much' and a touch of sauciness on the jaunty 'Somebody Touched Me'.

Before fleeing the confines of CBS, the young **ARETHA FRANKLIN** recorded **Yeah!!!** (★★★, PURE PLEASURE LP) in 1965. Notable for its iconic cover, featuring the singer peering down from behind dark sunglasses, this was an important bridge towards where she was heading with Atlantic. The trademark holler is evident on the jazzy 'This Could Be The Start Of Something'. The poised vocal on 'Once In A Lifetime' and the aching soul of 'Without The One You Love' hint towards the vocal traits that Jerry Wexler eventually set free.

Speaking of iconic sleeves, let's fast forward to 1972, where soul queen **CANDI STATON** had established herself at Rick Hall's Muscle Shoals Fame studio. **Candi Staton** (★★★★, KENT CD) features a bold close-up facial shot of the singer, with her Afro hair defiantly filling out the sleeve. Her third and final album for Fame featured typically earthy funk grooves coupled with the singer's arresting soulful vocal. The disco vibe of 'Young Hearts Run Free' would follow but this is 100% gritty southern soul, fully endorsed by none other than Elvis, who dug her version of 'In The Ghetto'.

We promised bagpipes, and for this and all kinds of other mind-bending weirdness, look no further than the debut album from **PARLIAMENT**, originally released in 1970 on Invictus Records. Even by George Clinton standards, **Osmium: Deluxe Edition** (★★★★★, DEMON LP) remains a bizarre oddity. A sprawling experimental opus with yodelling, pedal steel, psychedelic soul, straight ahead R&B and other funk-rock delights. This double vinyl reissue includes five bonus tracks. Essential.

Meanwhile, big hitters from the world of funk and soul mix with rock acts like The Band, Vanilla Fudge and The Fall on **A Different World: The Holland-Dozier-Holland Songbook** (★★★, KENT CD). Quite what the producers made of Mark E Smith's admittedly faithful interpretation of 'There's A Ghost In My House' is anyone's guess, yet it no doubt introduced a new generation to Motown and became the band's biggest hit.

When **LAMONT DOZIER** (the "D" in H-D-H) acrimoniously defected to ABC Records to embark on a solo career, the Holland brothers quickly compiled a mix of older tracks to cash in. **The New Lamont Dozier Album** (★★★, DEMON LP), aka *Love And Beauty*, released on Invictus in 1974, includes sublime modern soul gem 'Why Can't We Be Lovers' and the Marvin Gaye-like 'Don't Leave Me'. The album still hangs together as a whole, and this new edition is bolstered by five bonus tracks.

A second volume of Thom Bell productions are served up by curator Bob Stanley on **Didn't I Blow Your Mind? The Sound of Philadelphia Soul 1969-83** (★★★, ACE CD). Bell's symphonic soul arrangements are instantly recognisable. Furnishing his recordings with atypical instrumentation like French horn and oboes, Bell casually ushered in an era of smooth soul, influenced by the likes of Burt Bacharach and as visionary as Brian Wilson. The intro to The Delfonics' 'Didn't I Blow Your Mind This Time' was every bit as inventive as that of 'California Girls'.

The Westbound Sound (★★★★, WESTBOUND/ORG MUSIC LP) collects a choice selection of funk, soul and disco gems from the Detroit label's back catalogue. Dancefloor picks from Funkadelic, Denise LaSalle, Dennis Coffey and Ohio Players make this a deejay-friendly release and a decent introduction to the label. Fuzzy Hawkins' 'Tangerine Green' and 'Shake Your Head' by Spanky Wilson are two of the less-celebrated highlights.

The Northern Soul Scene (★★★★, DECCA 2-LP) is reissued on orange vinyl. The curious cast – including David Essex, Brotherhood Of Man and Elkie Brooks – may raise quizzical eyebrows, but this collection from the Decca archives is an expertly curated set of upbeat Brit-soul dancers. Many of these tracks were originally well-received on the '70s northern soul scene, while others later gained popularity on the '90s mod club scene.

Purists who crave the real thing might prefer the sounds emanating from across the pond. **Atlanta: Hotbed Of 70s Soul** (★★★, KENT CD) features an array of newly discovered tracks from the GRC, Aware and Hotlanta labels, reportedly funded by shady criminal activity. As the title suggests, these tracks were originally recorded in the '70s, so expect plush productions, sublime harmony soul and Southern fried funk. No expense was spared before the incarceration of owner Michael Thevis brought the walls tumbling down.

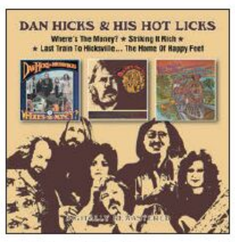
Shrine Records – Rare Soul Sides: Washington DC 1965-1967 (★★★★, KENT 7-45) is a lavish vinyl box set featuring seven 45s from the hallowed label established by Eddie Singleton and Berry Gordy's ex-wife Raynoma. Shrine has become a byword for rare soul. Northern soul floaters like 'We Called It Love' (Barbara Long), 'Watch Your Step' (The Cautions) and The Prophets' 'If I Had One Gold Piece' are highlights on a set that mixes dancers with exquisite soul ballads. For the latter style check out the two tracks by Tippie & The Wisemen *aka* Tippie & The Clovers of 'Bossa Nova Baby' fame.

Several years ago, the Numero label released a colossal box set featuring 45 rare soul 45s. The highlights have been whittled down onto **Eccentric Soul: Minibus** (★★★★, NUMERO 2-LP), a more affordable double album featuring a range of styles from across the ages. Proto-disco by Rokk, up-tempo group harmony from Crystal's Image and the street-funk of Black Fur are amongst the many deeply mined nuggets from across the US.

Finally, Youngstown, Ohio was the home of Tony March's long-running indie label. **Eccentric Soul: The Tammy Label** (★★★★, NUMERO LP) is a revealing deep dive into the label's rare soul and funk cuts. JC & The Soul Angels, led by JC Hunter and his daughters, feature heavily. Their feelgood 'True Love Is Hard To Find', with its funky guitar riff, is a highlight and the ebullient 'Dance Party (Part 1)' another recommended delight.

DAN HICKS & HIS HOT LICKS
Where's The Money? / Strikin' It Rich / Last Train To Hicksville
★★★★★

BGO 2-CD



Ex-Charlatan Dan Hicks' subsequent career with The Hot Licks marked him out as one of San Francisco's genuine musical mavericks. At odds with the amped-up Bay Area archetype, Hicks headed in an acoustic direction, fusing jazz, country roots and vaudeville in a way that remains uniquely entertaining and original. This two-disc set compiles the peak of The Hot Licks' output, namely the three albums cut for the Blue Thumb label in the early '70s.

Hicks, by this point, was a stalwart storyteller and singer. There is wry and often absurd humour in abundance on these albums which stand up to repeat listens, such is the stunning ingenuity of the intricate arrangements found on the likes of 'Canned Music'. Better still, songs like 'Moody Richard' and 'News From The Street' ooze a melancholic, harmonic tinge that remains beautiful.

Ben Phillipson

THE DB'S
Stands For deciBels
★★★

PROPELLER SOUND RECORDINGS CD/LP

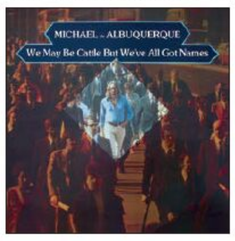
A huge influence on REM and an alluring mash-up of post-punk, powerpop and '60s British pop, The dB's embraced the possibilities of synthesised sound but allied it to melodic pop without drowning the feel of a song in its futuristic promise.

This is the first time their 1981 debut has been available on vinyl in the US and throughout the album the music swerves between the reappraised pop of, perhaps Joe Jackson on 'The Fight', to the jerky, twitchy keyboard antics and mannered vocals of Devo on 'Dynamite' – perhaps even a hint of Jane Aire & The Belvederes on the terrific 'Espionage'. Whenever the band threaten to become too disjointed in its efforts to connect modern studio technology and effects to its essentially traditional pop template, they instinctively veer towards their key anchors providing them with room to sprinkle disjointed elements onto their songs without alienating the listener.

Henry Hutton

MICHAEL DE ALBUQUERQUE
We May Be Cattle But We've All Got Names
★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY CD



You'd be forgiven for presuming that this 1973 solo effort from erstwhile ELO bassist De Albuquerque would be loaded with Jeff Lynne-isms acquired via the day job. Instead, *We May Be Cattle* is something of a lost gem that points to a particular point when rock's leaning towards jazz was at its most overt.

Among numerous UK session luminaries on call, starring roles are given to saxophonist Alan Skidmore and genius Timebox/Patto guitarist Ollie Halsall, heard to fine effect on 'Occasion' and 'Catharsis' respectively. Evoking the textural and densely chorded Steely Dan masterpieces of the era, *Cattle* nonetheless stands as the vision of its maker. The off-kilter but memorable songs are instantly appealing, while De Albuquerque's voice is a thing of wonder, leaning towards American soul, but complimented by a classic sounding UK studio production.

Ben Phillipson

JACKIE DESHANNON
Nothing Can Stop Me: Liberty Records Rarities 1960-62
★★★★

ACE CD

This latest collection of material by the renowned singer-songwriter gathers Jackie DeShannon's versions of 11 songs from the repertoire of Ray Charles, all recorded in the very early '60s and intended to form what would – and probably should – have been her debut LP on Liberty, *Hits Of The Genius,* had Bobby Darin not sneaked in first with his *Sings Ray Charles* album.

Opener 'Don't Let The Sun Catch You Crying' is a smoky late-night gem; 'This Little Boy Of Mine' and 'I Got A Sweetie' swing so hard and fast they'd have the dead up dancing; and Jackie's immaculate phrasing and delivery on 'Georgia On My Mind' sits perfectly on that sweet deep country-soul cusp. There are then a few more cuts culled from Ray Charles in the 13 additional tracks here, with the frenzied 'Nobody But You' being prime among them, as well as several great overlooked originals.

Hugh Dellar

DON & THE GOODTIMES
The Original Northwest Sound Of...
★★★★

SUNDAZED 2-LP

Often overshadowed by fellow North-Western garage acts The Sonics and The Wailers, Don & The Goodtimes hailed from Portland and were formed by classically trained wunderkind Don Galluci, who had previously been a member of The Kingsmen and, at the tender age of 15, played the signature keyboard riff on their smash version of 'Louie Louie'.

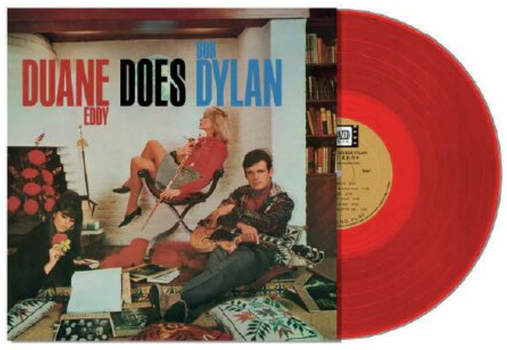
A prolific act, they released a slew of singles in the first couple of years of their existence, including killer teen-punkers like 'I'm Real', the righteous organ- and sax-driven instrumental 'Straight Scepter', and the hit that never was but should've been, 'You Were A Child', with a genius mid-section that appears totally out of the blue. Elsewhere, there are plenty of local staples like a powerhouse rendition of 'The Witch' and a storming clatter through 'Little Latin Lupe Me'. By 1969, they'd morphed into prog-psych act Touch, but this compilation captures the band at their bruising best.

Hugh Dellar

DUANE EDDY
Duane Eddy Does Bob Dylan
★★★★

The Biggest Twang Of Them All
★★★

BOTH SUNDAZED LPS



Dylan without lyrics might not make a lot of sense but when the artist is guitar great Duane Eddy things suddenly get a lot more interesting.

Produced by Lee Hazlewood, *Duane Eddy Does Bob Dylan* (1965) finds "the man with the twang" majestically picking his way through a selection of early Dylan classics. Accompanied by some muscular harmonica it's a revelation to hear Dylan remodelled through the reverberating prism of Eddy's guitar and most indelibly so on 'House Of The Rising Sun', 'All I Really Want To Do', 'Mr Tambourine Man' and 'Blowin' In The Wind', while the show-stealer is arguably a *tour de force* reworking of Barry McGuire's 'Eve Of Destruction'. Also produced by Hazlewood, *The Biggest Twang Of Them All* is essentially Duane Eddy plays the hits of '66: 'Batman', 'Monday Monday', 'Strangers In The Night', 'Daydream' *et al*. Easy-listening it may be but Duane's axe kicks like a mule.

Grahame Bent

THE EDGAR BROUGHTON BAND
Gone Blue: The BBC Sessions
★★★★

CHERRY RED 4-CD BOX SET

As early favourites of John Peel, the Broughtons' connection with Auntie Beeb began even before the release of their 1969 debut *Wasa Wasa*. Here, collected in one sturdy box, are the complete surviving sessions Warwick's finest recorded for the *BBC* between January '69 and July '73 – a bounty of some 32 previously unreleased tracks spread across four discs.

Originally broadcast on *Top Gear* and *Sounds Of The 70s*, the chronologically presented studio sessions are supplemented by appearances on *John Peel's Sunday Concert* and the *In Concert* slot from February '71 and May '72 respectively, the latter presented in both mono and stereo versions. Ever at the vanguard of the UK's underground scene alongside fellow travellers The Deviants and The Pink Fairies, the Broughtons are heard here getting heavy in both their original power trio configuration and later four-piece line up.

Grahame Bent

FANNY
Live On Beat-Club 71-72
★★★★★

REAL GONE CD/LP

Like the previous "live" album from the first female band to release an album on a major label (honorific variations abound), these selections from *Charity Ball* and *Fanny Hill* were recorded in a studio, not in front of an audience. The difference here, as guitarist June Millington recounts in her autobiography is that the German technicians really knew what they were doing and let the women run the show.

Blistering covers of 'Hey Bulldog,' 'Ain't That Peculiar' and 'Special Care' and the unreleased-at-the-time 'Summer Song' are among many highlights. Millington's fuzz bombs explode, her guitar solos stun, Alice DeBuhr is an automaton on sticks and Nickey Barclay's ivory pounding, organ fills, and soulful belting outdoes everything on the studio recordings. If this was released 50 years ago, Fanny would be in The Hall Of Fame by now, proving they were better than half the bands that ridiculed them.

Jeff Penczak

THE FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS
Live In Amsterdam 1972
★★★

LIBERATION HALL 2-CD/2-LP

When The Flying Burrito Brothers toured Europe in 1972 it was without any of the founding members who'd made classic debut album *The Gilded Palace Of Sin*. With the band booked to perform the concerts, Rick Roberts, who had come on board for the recording of their eponymous third, assembled the musicians whose opening night performance is captured on this double album.

There's scant trace here of the "Cosmic American Music" envisaged by founder Gram Parsons. What we have instead is conventional country-rock interspersed with bluegrass. 'Sin City' and 'Christine's Tune' are faithful facsimiles of the originals but much

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BROKENSILENCE

STIV BATORS
"Disconnected"
Originally released in 1980, this was Stiv Bators' first solo album. Now reissued with 2 bonus tracks, not available on the original version, a slightly different picture on the cover (the actual unfiltered photo as used on the 1980 issue) and a booklet with extensive liner notes and photos. New generations continue to discover it. It still holds up very well and sounds as fresh and vibrant as ever. **LP**

WE ALL TOGETHER
"S/T"
After remaining unavailable for years, here's the long-awaited vinyl reissue of the debut album (1972) by one of the epoch-making groups in the history of Peruvian rock: We All Together. A must for any '70s rock collector. **LP / Digital**

MELCOCHITA Y LOS YORK'S "El Sicodélico"
Two of the wildest songs contained on the last LP of Los York's had never appeared on a single despite their enormous potential for the dance floor and the interest they aroused among DJs since their rediscovery in the 60s scene. **7"/ Digital**

BROOKLYN SOUNDS
"Brooklyn Sounds!"
Brooklyn Sounds legendary 1971 debut album, full of heavy Nuyorican underground salsa dura propelled by raw trombones and in-your-face percussion, born of the barrio streets and the band's Caribbean heritage. **LP / Digital**

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OUT SOON!

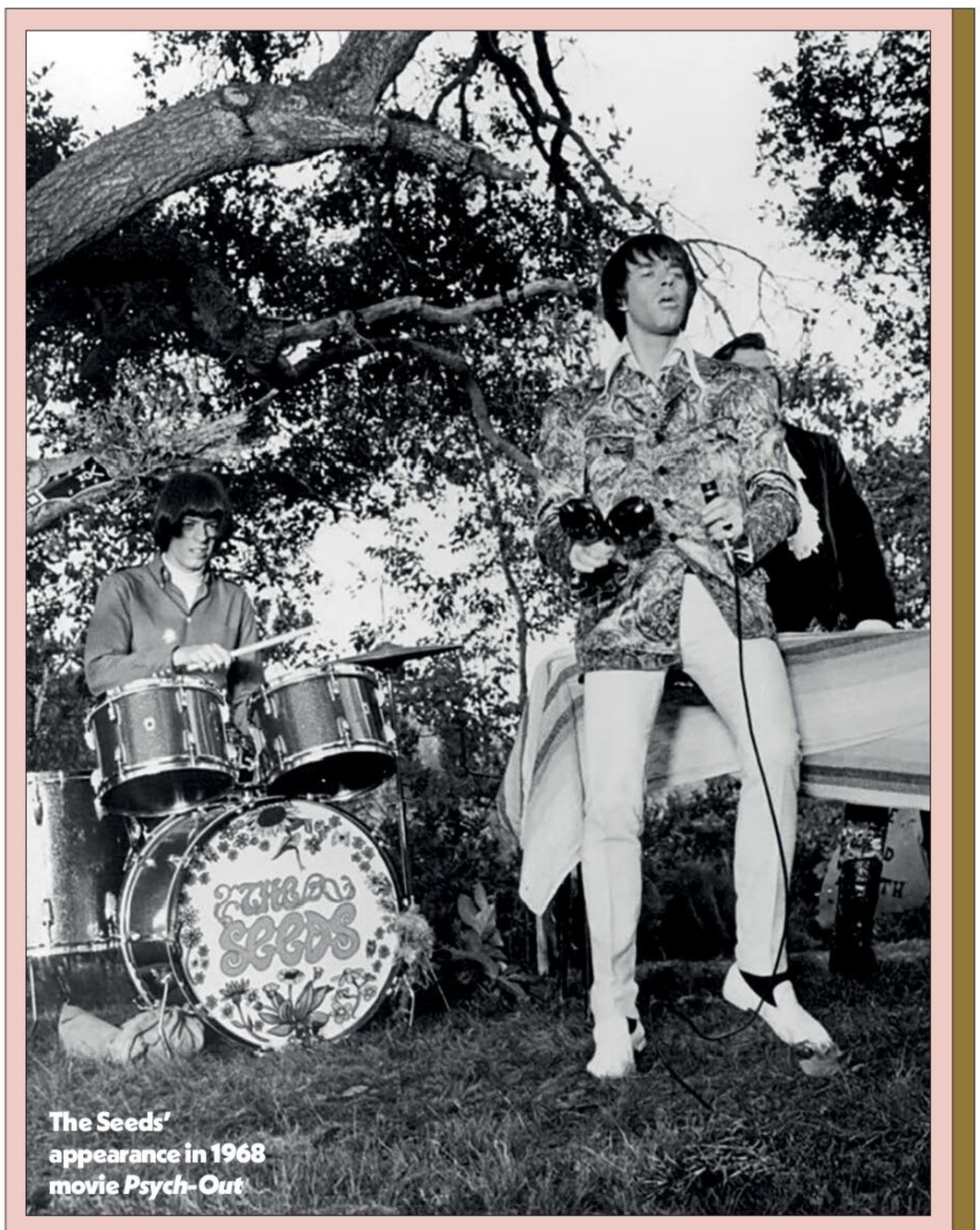
APC95
Project V - There's No Sorrow 7"EP
New 'project' for old lions (former Hermits, Rookies, Scrubs...) that mixes garage, psychedelia, surf, and a sprinkling of hard rock, stirred in a lysergic pot left to simmer, like a nutria stew on a foggy day in the lowlands.

OUT NOW!

AP105
Black Snake Moan - Lost In Time LP/CD
A travel through time and space between folk and psychedelic rock, evoking a dreamlike and hypnotic imagery, narrator of night visions and desert dunes burning on the horizon. Marco Contestabile at the helm!

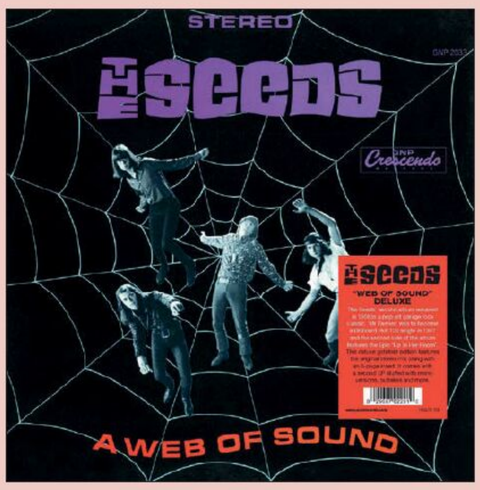
STILL HOT!

AP102
SmallTown Tigers - Crush On You LP/CD
Italy's number one all-woman punk power trio Smalltown Tigers follow up their street smart 2020 mini-album "Five Things" with their debut full-length.
Ten high-energy buzzsaw power-pop party-starters in the spirit of '76!



The Seeds' appearance in 1968 movie *Psych-Out*

Tripmakers



THE SEEDS
A Web Of Sound
★★★★

ACE/GNP CRESCENDO 2-LP

Released just months after their debut long-player, The Seeds knocked out *A Web Of Sound*, headlined by minor hit 'Mr Farmer', a pulsating keyboard-driven ode to growing crops of a somewhat dubious nature (the single version is also included here).

Consisting of just eight tracks, with only two on Side Two – the mesmerising 'Up In Her Room' taking up nearly 15 minutes – Sky Saxon was still spitting out his lyrics with gusto and relish, although this release seemed to move away from their original garage-rock ethos to a more mature and experimental sound, one that Saxon declared "flower-punk", although one coupled with some particular trippy moments.

This two-LP edition features the original mono mix of the album, which will be a collectors' dream given it has been unavailable on vinyl since the '60s and includes a different take of 'Rollin' Machine' (which doesn't sound much different from the actual released version), and several alternate versions of 'I Tell Myself' and 'Just Let Go'. 'Pictures & Designs' sounds like their own attempt at 'I'm A Man' – we get take 14, and it's equally as good as the one that came out.

There's also the first take of single 'The Wind Blows Your Hair', which was a co-write by Saxon and Buddy Bigelow and recorded in January 1966 – while a further three attempts were produced during '67. This version is notable for its sparse arrangement without taking away any of its spookiness, helped by its dark lyrics. 'Dreaming Of Your Love' was the B-side to 'Pushin' Too Hard' in late 1965 and the fourth version is presented here, with Saxon's snarling vocals complementing Daryl Hooper's swirling keyboards, but sonically harking back to the first album.

Lovingly presented in a gatefold sleeve, this new edition comes with a glorious eight-page booklet jam-packed with liner notes from Alec Palao, another excellent presentation of a slab of The Seeds' history and one that should adorn any '60s nut's collection.

Dom Picksley

of the set consists of songs never recorded in the studio by any version of the band, mostly covers, but also an otherwise unheard ballad, 'I Already Know'. Intimate acoustic renditions of the likes of Merle Haggard's 'White Line Fever' offer some of the most affecting moments in what was clearly a crowd-pleasing show.

Clive Webb

FRANK ZAPPA & THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION
Live At The Whisky A Go Go 1968
★★★

ZAPPA / UME 3-CD/2-LP/5-LP

The party line on Frank Zappa's career, for most casual fans (and detractors), has him vitally important and creative for three or four albums, followed by a gradual (or immediate) descent into fake jazz and toilet humour. But – surprise! – as this legendary live document shows all too clearly, he was both of those things right from the start.

This spawling multi-format set was recorded on one night at The Whisky A Go Go in the summer of 1968. The band is a monster. The show is an entirely different sort of monster; disjointed, self-referential, with lengthy bouts of improvisation on percussion instruments and new compositions which presage *Uncle Meat*, with some old favourites from the first three LPs in seriously different versions. For us rabid fans, it's absolutely vital. Many of you will wonder what the point is. Some of you will be angry. Same as it ever was.

Mike Fornatale

ROCKIN' HORSE
Yes It Is
★★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY CD

You want anachronistic? We've got anachronistic. When Liverpudlian lifers Jimmy Campbell and Billy Kinsley decided to buck the trends by cutting an album that homaged the early '60s girl-group sounds on which they'd based their early careers, they inadvertently created a monster: a guitar-heavy proto-powerpop masterpiece that, for all its throwback aspirations, still sounds almost futuristic.

This is largely down to Campbell's melancholic, broken-heart-on-sleeve lyrics, candid to the point of discomfort – who else was writing material like 'Don't You Ever Think I Cry' and 'I'm Trying To Forget You' in 1971? Try listening to 'Son, Son' as a parent and not choking back a tear. The band – pieced together from sundry jobbing players – are alternately white-hot and endearingly sloppy, while the shared lead vocals can't help but evoke Lennon's contemporary confessionals. Three non-album sides add little, but don't let that stop you grabbing this now.

Andy Morten

RUMPLESTILTSKIN
Rumplestiltskin
★★★

SOMMOR LP

Here's the first album, originally released in 1970, from Rumplestiltskin, a band put together by producer Shel Talmy featuring some of the most respected session men of the period. With Herbie Flowers, Clem Cattini and Alan Hawkshaw amongst the players there's a guarantee of quality in these performances, although Peter Lee Sterling's throaty vocals may be an acquired taste, as the band merge heavy-rock with a funky southern sound.

Throughout the album there's a theme of "fade and return" in the musical attack, quiet tuneful passages segue into pounding rock before breaking into keyboard interludes, while slow bluesy meanderings erupt into soulful instrumental workouts showcasing Hawkshaw's accomplished keyboard skills. This is a repro of the original British version of the album with gatefold sleeve and is sourced from the master tapes to include the sound effects and linking passages missing from the American release, with the added thrill a choice of verdant green or black vinyl.

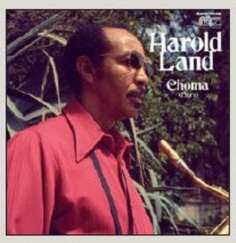
Henry Hutton

tune up

THOMAS PATTERSON gets fresh with the latest jazz reissues

After a seemingly endless-winter, the summer finally approaches, so we kick off this month's jazz column with the sunshine-filled 1967 album **Soul In The Horn** (★★★★, BE WITH LP) from trumpeter and *Green Hornet* theme composer **AL HIRT**. This is fresh and funky instrumental gear with a slight easy-listening edge (comparisons to a long-lost KPM LP aren't a million miles wide of the mark) – it's no wonder that it's been rinsed for samples by the likes of De La Soul and The Roots. Bask in its glow.

On a similarly funky semi-library album trip comes **NORIO MAEDA & ALL-STARS**' **Rock Communication Yagibushi** (★★★★, WEWANTSOUNDS CD/LP), a 1970 album from Japan that sees traditional Japanese folk songs get a breakbeat-heavy jazz-rock makeover, pitched somewhere between David Axelrod, Lalo Schifrin and Ennio Morricone. Tracks like 'Tsugaru Jongara Bushi' and 'Mt. Bandai Aizu' will have crate-diggers salivating, and it's a wonder that Tarantino hasn't already nabbed this for some Far East B-movie action. Gorgeous.



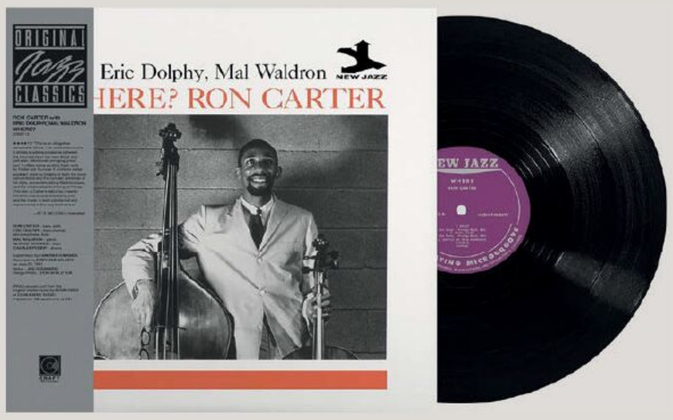
From the same label comes **HAROLD LAND**'s **Choma (Burn)** (★★★, WEWANTSOUNDS LP), a 1971 release originally on Bob Shad's Mainstream label that sees the hard-bop saxophonist push into slightly more spiritual/experimental territory with the help of a stellar supporting band, including vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson. Across four cuts, the group pursue a free-ranging sound that hides into some wild clattering territory, especially on 'Black Caucus'. It's interesting, but if you want Land at his absolute best, check out another reissue, **The Fox** (★★★★, CRAFT LP) from '59. Produced by the aforementioned David Axelrod, this is straight-ahead hard-bop straight out of Los Angeles and performed by a killer quintet. It's the kind of music you could imagine coursing out of an early Kubrick film-noir or a jazz club in *LA Confidential*.

Land crops up again on pianist **HAMPTON HAWES**' album **For Real!** (★★★★, CRAFT LP), recorded in 1958 but not released until '61. This is a spry, laidback affair, perfect Sunday morning listening. Hawes' playing is nimble and light, across a mix of originals and covers from the likes of Cole Porter, but the most striking thing about this handsomely repressed vinyl offering is the obituary on the back cover for Scott LaFaro, the Bill Evans Trio bassist who lends his considerable skills to *For Real!* and who had just been killed in a car accident. This album was/is a fitting testimony to his talent.

Two semi-companion albums featuring a shared cast of players. From November 1960 comes **Newport Rebels** (★★★★, CANDID CD) by **JAZZ ARTISTS GUILD**, a collective made up of Charles Mingus, Max Roach, Eric Dolphy, Roy Eldridge and Jo Jones, a mix of young and old players who formed in opposition to an increasingly conservative Newport Jazz Festival. Getting together in New York, they recorded this set for the Candid label, covering standards like 'Wrap Up Your Troubles' and 'Tain't Nobody's Business If I Do' with a bluesy-swagger and an old-school trad-jazz spirit. It won't knock your socks off, but it might give them a quick wash.

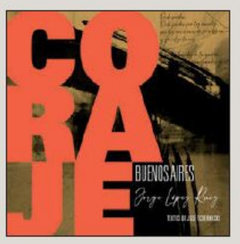
With many of the same musicians, **Incarnations** (★★★★, CANDID CD) is a selection of unreleased cuts recorded by **CHARLES MINGUS** from the same period. This is Mingus' typically shimmering bop, one for completists really as most of the tracks are alternate versions of well-known Mingus standards, although the inclusion of the previously unknown 'All The Things You Are (All)' makes this set intriguing.

Where? (★★★, CRAFT LP) from **RON CARTER WITH ERIC DOLPHY, MAL WALDRON** sees the bassist team up with Mingus cohort Dolphy and pianist Waldron for his debut LP, recorded in 1961. Carter and Dolphy had played together before in Chico Hamilton's group, but if they swung there, they're a bit more hesitant here; it's nice enough, uncomplicated jazz but there isn't the absolute *oomph* that Carter would bring to other projects, and which would apparently make him the most recorded jazz bassist of all time.



MAL WALDRON is back again on **Four Classic Albums** (★★★, AVID JAZZ 2-CD), a no-frills double CD comprised of albums recorded between 1956 and '59 – *Mal 1, Mal 2, Mal 4* and *Left Alone* (what, no *Mal 3*?). Waldron is a terrific player, and these albums show off his chops at the keys, especially on the kinetic *Left Alone* – although a mark must be deducted as this edition omits tracks for space-saving reasons and re-sequences *Mal 4* due to time constraints. More piano thrills on double CD with **Four Classic Albums** (★★★★, AVID JAZZ 2-CD) from **THE 3 SOUNDS**. This similarly no-frills set brings us four LPs from '58 to '60, *The 3 Sounds*, *Feelin' Good*, *Moods* and *LD+3*, recorded with saxophonist Lou Donaldson. This is cool gear indeed, to be filed somewhere alongside Ramsey Lewis and Billy Taylor, with some ultra-groovy takes on songs like 'Love For Sale', 'Tenderly' and 'I'm Beginning To See The Light'.

KENNY BURRELL & JOHN COLTRANE (★★★★, CRAFT LP) sees the guitarist and saxophonist team up for a set recorded in 1958 and released in '63. The key tracks here are the opener and closer, written by pianist Tommy Flanagan, 'Freight Trane' and 'Big Paul' (we're guessing named after bassist Paul Chambers, who truly cooks here). Burrell's playing is suitably crisp and there's some crazy double bass-bowing that enlivens the whole shebang. Chambers also pops up on **RED GARLAND TRIO**'s **Groovy** (★★★★, CRAFT LP) from '57, another piano-led set with covers like 'C-Jam Blues' and 'Willow Weep For Me' that swing not inconsiderably.



Finally, to Argentina and an album thought destroyed by the country's military junta, **Corage Buenos Aires** (★★★★, ALTER CAT LP) from **JORGE LOPEZ RUIZ**, a far-out compendium of spiritual jazz with ethereal choirs and hippified spoken-word passages. Considering it was believed lost, the sound is absolutely terrific, a mindbender of an album that wouldn't be out of place soundtracking a Jodorowsky movie, especially on the evocative title track, which proves that even in the most repressive regimes, the human spirit will always prevail.

reviews then

NANCY SINATRA
How Does That Grab You?
★★★★★

LIGHT IN THE ATTIC CD/LP

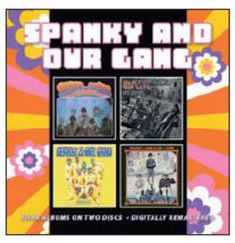
There's so much to like about Nancy's second studio album it's difficult to know where to start. Released in May 1966 amid the Nancy-mania that arrived in the wake of 'These Boots Are Made For Walkin'' and accompanying *Boots* album, *How Does That Grab You?* reunited Nancy with producer/songwriter/mentor Lee Hazlewood and arranger Billy Strange.

Composed of consummate pop covers – Johnny Mandel's 'The Shadow Of Your Smile', Buck Owens' 'Crying Time', Tony Hatch's 'Call Me', Sonny Bono's 'Bang Bang' and a clutch of Lee Hazlewood originals including 'Sand', 'My Baby Cried All Night Long' and the title track – and boasting A-list arrangements and perfect vocal performances, the album is an enduring moment of mid-60s pop gold. Stand-outs are all around, however the prescient Nancy & Lee duet 'Sand' and the desolately haunting reworking of 'Bang Bang' merit special mention. This definitive reissue includes two bonus tracks and a 20-page booklet which includes a new Q&A with Nancy.

Grahame Bent

SPANKY & OUR GANG
Spanky & Our Gang / Like To Get To Know You / Anything You Choose / Live
★★★

BGO 2-CD



For all their commercial success, Spanky & Our Gang seldom feature in '60s retrospectives. Unfairly maligned as a dime store Mamas & Papas, this collection is a welcome reminder of their uneven but intriguing career.

The eponymous 1967 debut album includes hit singles 'Lazy Day', 'Making Every Minute Count' and 'Sunday Will Never Be The Same', the latter a wonderful slice of baroque folk-pop that showcases the band's warm harmonies. What lets it down are lapses into vaudevillian corniness such as the unamusing Broadway tune 'Ya Got Trouble'. The following year's *Like To Get To Know You* is also inconsistent. There are highs – the sublime 'Sunday Mornin'' and an unusual sunshine-pop interpretation of Leonard Cohen's 'Suzanne', but many indulgent lows. Nineteen-sixty-nine's *Anything You Choose* is the best of the three studio albums, an ambitious song suite that's more earnest in tone, not least on poignant social protest anthem 'Give A Damn'.

Clive Webb

THE TREMELOES
Master
★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY CD

Entirely self-composed and housed in prog-friendly cover art, the Trems' 1970 album almost entirely eschewed the party time vibes of the previous three years' (dwindling) hit singles, and saw the group grow beards and bemoan their teenybopper fans in the press.

Fortunately, their pop smarts remained intact – no tedious blues-rock workouts here, thank you. Harnessing cutting-edge studio technology, the Trems looked to the US west coast and UK rock scene for inspiration, resulting in a satisfying, well-crafted set of mature songs that ultimately wouldn't find an audience. 'But Then I...', 'Before I Sleep' and 'By The Way' will appease Marmalade and Honeybus fans; 'Wait For Me', 'Try Me' and 'Willow Tree' pile on the dual (duelling?) guitars. Only the Elvis pastiche 'Baby' is a misstep. The 12 bonus tracks, largely drawn from subsequent singles, slowly slide back into chart-friendly waters.

Andy Morten

THE TWELVE HOUR FOUNDATION
THF Compendium
★★★★

DISQUES BOUM 2-CD

It could never be said that there's a shortage of library-music. Gone are the days when diggers rummaged around the bowels of the old BBC buildings desperate to uncover snippets of musical nostalgia. With KPM and The Radiophonic Workshop now household names (sort of), the doors of the library world are wide open embracing bands including Bristol-based duo The Twelve Hour Foundation.

Jez Butler and Polly Hulse came together over a decade ago when the former needed help performing his album *The Lighter Side Of Concrete*. And, as the THF, the pair not only embrace nostalgia in spirit, but in reality too using a mix of Moog, Korg and *musique concrete*. *THF Compendium* offers a smorgasbord of past recordings of albums such as 2020's *Six Twenty Negative* and 2015's *Macaroni Cheese* EP, not to mention a healthy dollop of unreleased material. For fans of Ghost Box, Clay Pipe and Castles In Space – you cannot go wrong.

Sarah Gregory

VARIOUS ARTISTS
In The Beginning There Was Rhythm
★★★★★

SOUL JAZZ CD/2-LP

When it comes to compilations, Soul Jazz Records is no slouch, but their post-punk dance-orientated *In The Beginning There Was Rhythm* is up there as one of their very best. Unavailable since its original 2001 release, this anthology covers a period of underground innovation that permeates so much of the music that we hear today.

Underscored by a searing political and/or social invective, this album showcases a breed of borderline *avant-garde* musicianship (it was no longer unacceptable to be able to play more than three chords), throughout which the groove is central. Featuring two tracks from world music-inflected 23 Skidoo, alongside pioneering all-female band The Slits and Cabaret Voltaire's experimental 'Slugging For Jesus', *In The Beginning There Was Rhythm* is both thrilling and vibrant. Throbbing Gristle are here, as are early Human League with electro-classic 'Being Boiled', not to mention The Pop Group, Gang Of Four and A Certain Ratio, who bookend the album. Essential.

Sarah Gregory

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Jon Savage's The Secret Public
★★★★★

ACE 2-CD

Designed to tie in with the release of his forthcoming book of the same name – a monumental exploration of the way in which LGBTQ+ resistance has shaped post-war pop culture – this latest collection from the always inquisitive and discerning ears of Jon Savage takes in everything from Tamla to glam, funk to '60s pop-art, and moves from the more cryptic and coded to the uncloseted and celebratory. It also puts artists who identified as LGBTQ+ alongside tracks where the lyrical content ensured they went down well in gay and lesbian clubs, or which were shaped in some way by gay aesthetics.

You get the flamboyant fluence and strut of Esquerita alongside John Leyton's haunting death drama; Jobriath out-Bowie-ing Bowie and The Miracles' early disco epic 'Ain't Nobody Straight In LA'. Perhaps most remarkable is the funky dancefloor soul of '60s trans pioneer Jackie Shane. A timely, listenable and important set.

Hugh Dellar

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Mejor De Los Nuggetz
★★★★

LIBERATION HALL CD/LP

Roaring out of the Spanish-speaking world comes *Mejor De Los Nuggetz*, 20 garage and psych covers of '60s smashers from Mexican, Spanish and Latin-American bands. Culled from 2013 box set *Los Nuggetz: '60s Garage & Psych From Latin America*, here we have artists like Los Shain's, Los Mustang, Los Apson, Los Salvejes and Los Locos Del Ritmo tackling cuts by The Beatles, Stones, Kinks and Who, all in their native tongues, and mostly with snarling fuzzed-up guitars.

Highlights are many – Los Shain's nicely dust up 'Train Kept A Rollin''; Los Belmonts give The Yardbirds a run for their money with their take on 'Over Under Sideways Down'; and Lone Star's version of 'My Generation' might just take Townshend and co in a rumble. Rounded out with a couple of vintage commercials for Coca Cola and Volkswagen, this is great fun, the ideal accompaniment to your next *Día de la Hispanidad* bash.

Thomas Patterson

THE YARDBIRDS
Psycho Daisies
★★★

DEMON LP

It's often the case that you can chart the true artistic evolution of a '60s beat-era band by its B-sides, a place where self-penned experimentation could thrive while the topsides were pumped in by Tin Pan Alley hit machines. The opposite can almost be said of The Yardbirds, as this 15-track collection of UK and US flipsides reminds us.

Even as their in-house songwriting team delivered a series of ground-breaking A-sides, they were still re-working Mose Allison, Chuck Berry and Elmore James numbers well into the their purple period, barely concealed as 'New York City Blues', 'Jeff's Boogie' and 'The Nazz Are Blue'. Not that you'd notice, such was the intensity of Jeff Beck's work in 1966. When Jimmy Page, himself no stranger to a spot of wholesale plagiarism, stepped in for the group's schizophrenic Mickie Most era, Muddy Waters was always there amongst the oddball pop sides. Sound quality on this purple splatter vinyl is fair to middling, despite the "mono masters" tag.

Andy Morten

NOMAD EEL RECORDS

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New Distractions
by Dream Phases - NER-048

Emerging from the City of Angels' neo-psychedelic rock scene in 2017, Dream Phases reflects Calfornia's natural splendor and adventuresome inner spirit in its music.

The earthy-yet-exalted sounds of the Byrds, the Beach Boys and Crosby, Stills, Nash ,Young – as well as latter-dayartists like the Rain Parade, Elliott Smith and Autolux – figure into the band's family tree. Whilethis lineage is worth noting, what comes through in the band's latest work is an individual approach that translates the experiences of its members into something undeniably compelling.

First track to last, you can hear this vitality in New Distractions, Dream Phases' sophomore album.

Vinyl LP, Cassette, CD
available through Nomad Eel Records

EXCLUSIVE RELEASES

LP release coming summer of 2024

Hold Drugs Dear
By R.J. Bloke - NER-049

Hold Drugs Dear is a dynamic solo effort from RJ Bloke, front man & songwriter for Los Angeles based alt-country, americana, roots rock quartet Patrolled By Radar.

These warm and urgent analog recordings feature an array of stellar guests including Alex Moore, Spencer Livingston (Livingmore), Eli Wulfmeier (Leroy from the North), Peter Curry (Los Straitjackets, Nick Lowe), and Davey Allen (Eric Burdon, Davey & The Midnights).

This collection of well-crafted poetic and melodic songs are sure to appeal to fans of Dylan, Ray Davies, Jeff Tweedy, Lennon & Paul McCartney and many more, truly magificent.

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A multitude of new music

Songs Of Innocence And Experience

ROBYN HITCHCOCK
1967: Vacations In The Past
★★★★

TINY GHOST CD/LP

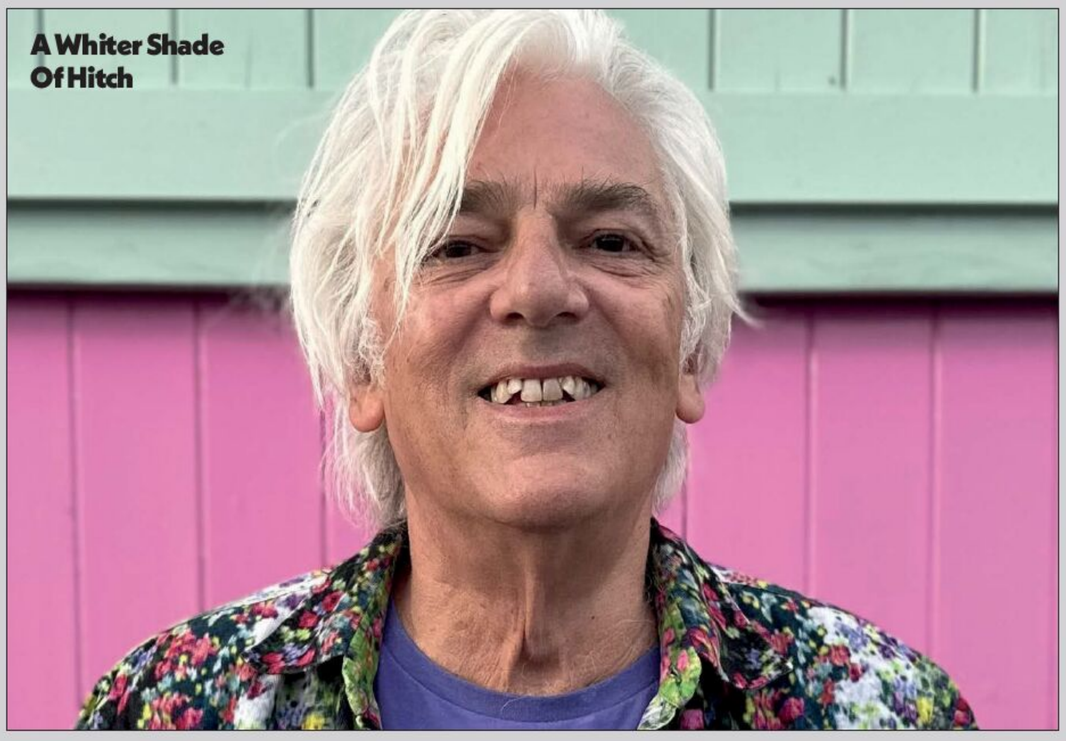
It's odd to hear archetypal English eccentric and psychedelic gentleman Hitchcock singing "vacations" rather than "holidays" on the title track of his 24th solo album, but one can hardly fault his choice of destination. This collection of acoustic covers accompanies Hitchcock's new memoir, *1967: How I Got There And Why I Never Left,* a personal look at the life-changing influence of that pivotal musical year. As such, it's tempting to hear it as the soundtrack to a play, following a youthful Hitchcock through 12 months of discovery and transformation.

A stately 'A Whiter Shade Of Pale' acts as a scene-setting overture, evoking a distant era almost as remote as Chaucer's day, yet still somehow within living memory. 'Itchycoo Park' is all childlike innocence and exuberance, while 'Burning Of The Midnight Lamp' (featuring Hitchcock's old Soft Boys sparring partner Kimberley Rew on extra guitar) is definitely a song of "experience" that prefigures the disorienting mind expansion suggested by 'I Can Hear The Grass Grow'.

Perhaps the album's most effective reinvention is 'San Francisco (Flowers In Your Hair)', recast as a cautionary tale, with the dippy, sugar-coated optimism of the original replaced by a knowing, shadowy chug and Kelley Stoltz's droning sitar buzz. The "gentle people" are in motion towards inevitable disillusionment and worse, with Manson waiting in the wings, and Hitchcock's call to ensure those metaphorical daisies stay in your barnet sounds less like whimsy and more like an urgent magical warning.

If 'Waterloo Sunset' is an understandable retreat to known certainties and safe, homely comforts, then 'See Emily Play' and 'My White Bicycle' celebrate the surrealism of the everyday and, with their absurdist humour, seem the true forebears of Hitchcock's own work. His self-composed title track perfectly complements the ISB's wittily prescient 'Way Back In The 1960s', and only the closing 'A Day In The Life' feels redundant; but then, how could you not include it? Framed by vinyl crackle and needle drop effects, the song seems placed in quotation marks. Afterwards, we wake blinking in the present, and wonder: what happened then? What happened since? And what happened to us?

Ben Graham


A Whiter Shade Of Hitch

MARINA ALLEN
Eight Pointed Star
★★★★★

FIRE CD/LP

When Marina Allen emerged with *Candlepower* in 2021, she seemed part of a timely, general move towards ethereal, introspective Laurel Canyon songcraft among the newer artists springing from the US west coast. Excellent follow-up *Centrifics* seemed more musically idiosyncratic, winning plaudits, not least in these pages. As if to cement her standing, *Eight Pointed Star* sounds like an artist approaching the peak of their powers.

Allen's voice is an expressive, swooping instrument, free of vibrato, like a country-leaning Judee Sill roaming America's great open plains. It gives fuel to songs which seem abstract yet richly evocative. Early highlights 'Deep Fake' and 'Red Cloud' are lyrically intriguing, full of instant hooks amongst their unexpected twists, while a lush, understated Chris Cohen production helps frame a near-perfect nine-song album, it's songs and arrangements revealing new details with each listen.

Ben Phillipson

AWEN ENSEMBLE
Cadair Idris
★★★★★

NEW SOIL CD/LP

Leeds-based septet Awen Ensemble's debut offers a song cycle about Snowdonia's Eryri Mountain. *Cadair Idris* encompasses myth and bardic traditions into a heady blend of jazz and folk that authentically feels like the legacy of releases from Richie Havens' Stormy Forest off-shoot, as well as ambitious one shots from RCA'S British folk albums by Daylight and Synanthesia.

The mostly acoustic sounds create a beautiful after-hours feel that verges on the ethereal, through Amy Clark's haunting vocals and Emyr Penry Dance's otherworldly trumpet sounds. Highlights include the title track that subtly incorporates Vangeli's 'Let it Happen' and Mainstream-era Flora Purim. 'If I Fall' has a similar trajectory to John Martyn's *Solid Air*, while Clark's songwriting brings *Some Songs I've Saved*-era Kathy Smith to mind. Modal jazz outing 'Rhyd' warrants repeated listening while 'Unsettled' is a soulful free-folk track that sounds like a British equivalent of The New Rotary Connection with Glen Leach's stunning Rhodes work shining in the middle eight.

Rhys Jones

GABRIEL BIRNBAUM
Patron Saint Of Tireless Losers
★★★

WESTERN VINYL LP

The drunk and the delusional, the defeated and the disoriented; Gabriel Birnbaum gives voice on his new solo album to characters whose narratives are from the darker side of life.

Birnbaum's warm but wounded voice anchors songs that subtly shift from the country lilt of 'Laughing Backwards' to the fuzzy indie-rock of 'The More They Come Around' and the melodic piano-driven pop of 'Perfect Again'. There's an interesting tension in songs such as the intriguingly titled 'A Sleeping Dog, A Heavy Sigh' between the shimmering and lightly psychedelic music and the lyrical refrain, "I know I'm nothing."

Elsewhere, as on 'Alison, Alone Again', the tone is more obviously melancholic, Birnbaum conveying the weary late-night feel of much of the album with a lyric in which the shadow cast by a streetlight offers the only company to the sad protagonist.

Clive Webb

BLACK SNAKE MOAN
Lost In Time
★★★★

AREA PIRATA CD/LP

The third album from Italian guitarist-songwriter Marco Contestabile in his Black Snake Moan guise is a journey through the darkness in search of the light.

Harnessing the tambourine-driven desert-psych of The Black Angels and Warlocks to a gothic-rock churn and clang, as on opener 'Dirty Ground' and lead single 'Light The Incense', Contestabile definitely inhabits the shadowy side of the garage. But the Farfisa and jangle drone of 'Come On Down' evokes the first two Doors albums, while 'Shade Of The Sun' dials back the atmospherics for a simple yet effective plaintive lament with a Dandy Warhols feel.

Elsewhere, both the pulsing, narcotic drift of 'Sunrise', featuring a neo-disco bassline, and the melodic 'Goin' Back' feel like contenders for a leftfield Netflix soundtrack. Best of all is the closing 'Cross The Border', on which shimmering open-tuned guitars create mirrored layers of sound in a shamanic shoegaze hymn of redemption.

Ben Graham

THE BRKN RECORD
The Architecture Of Oppression Part 2
★★★★★

BBE CD/LP

The Architecture Of Oppression Part 1, the first album by Heliocentrics co-founder and bass man Jake Ferguson's Brkn Record alias, turned many heads back in 2021, its militant stance and mixture of hip-hop, deep soul, psychedelia and cinematic sounds showcasing Ferguson's compositional skills outside of his regular band.

This new volume, whilst remaining no less hard hitting with its rallying cry against institutional racism and systemic discrimination, carries its message over a richer and more deeply layered sound palette, throwing deep, spiritual jazz into the mix alongside a list of gifted vocal collaborators that make this not just music with a message, but a rich, engaging musical experience. If proof were needed then look no further than 'We Need Freedom', eight minutes of warm, percussive jazz that ebbs and flows magnificently, or the heavy Afrobeat of 'Intensity In Five', featuring poet Anthony Joseph. A powerful and moving listening experience.

Paul Osborne

BURGHERS ORQUESTRA
Cautionary Tails
★★★★

DEWITYOURSELF CD/LP

Since widening their repertoire from their garage-rock roots, Burghers Orquestra have continued to investigate their fascination with synths and electronica to produce works which move in unexpected directions and confound sensibilities.

Kicking off with 'Mud In Your Eyes', a compact, booming affair, these songs add off-kilter vibrato and pulsating tones to an obvious understanding of traditional pop, including some thoughtful lyrics, and can switch from evoking a feeling akin to walking down a dark street in a bad neighbourhood on 'Veteran's Day' to almost providing a 'Mr Blue Sky' for this cynical jaded generation on 'Wrote A Song'. Dense, wall of sound tremolo-laden pop can morph into minimalist strum or heavy psychedelia as the Orquestra tears up the rule book, expected chords fail to materialise and the song direction zig-zags sideways as bursts of synth chime over crashing tambourines to provide a most accomplished set.

Henry Hutton

AMANDA COBURN
Between The Moon And The Milkman
★★★★

SHOEBOX LP

First thing you encounter is a tinkling ukulele (tenor AND baritone, no less!) and Coburn's dainty sonorous voice, singing songs that feel like centuries-old fairy tales. Inspired by Joni Mitchell, Françoise Hardy and Kate Bush, there are also tender elements of Marissa Nadler and Sandy Denny in these heartbreaking, personal lyrics and swaying arrangements.

The little-girl whisper of the nostalgic 'Please Go Gently' has the tenderness of a schoolmarm reading stories to her charges and 'Dublin Serenade' recalls a hotel-less night wandering its streets as a student. 'Sleepy Town' kicks up its heels like an unleashed Pogues hootenanny and 'See Saw' is another children's lullaby to sing the wee ones to sleep. The sea shanty swagger of 'Perfect Storm' (Coburn calls it "Celtic Beatles") and her Harry Nilsson tribute 'I'd Love To Love You' are just two more highlights of an album full of endearing charms.

Jeff Penczak

EARTH TONGUE
Great Haunting
★★★★

IN THE RED CD/LP

On first listen this may sound like more pastiche retro-metal in the vein of Uncle Acid & The Deadbeats, but that's not the whole story. New Zealand duo Gussie Larkin (guitar, vocals) and Ezra Simons (drums) claim '70s and '80s horror cinema as their biggest influence, and there's a gleeful, popcorn-at-the-slasher-flick joyfulness to the likes of lead single 'Bodies Dissolve Tonight!' that would get Earth Tongue kicked out of doom school.

Sometimes sounding like Cardiacs doing Black Sabbath ('Out Of This Hell', 'The Mirror'), at other points their stoner-rock with a post-punk psych twist is closer to a sludge-splatter B-52's.

The down-tuned garage primitivism of 'Nightmare' picks up the pace, before the prog dynamics of 'Miraculous Death' and the folk-horror vibe of 'Sit Next To Satan', with half-chanted vocals, gargling analogue synth and churning fuzz guitar. By closing mini-epic 'The Reluctant Host', demonic possession has never sounded so much fun.

Ben Graham

I FENOMENI!
Signore, e Signori, cantano...
★★★

PSYCH-OUT LP

This writer has been commending the work of this group from Genova, Italy, for many years. While inspired by the broad range of beat, garage and psychedelic sounds from the mid- to late '60s, I Fenomeni! never fail to implement their work with something cool, special and of their own making. Their *Dodicesima Dimensione* album from 2015, as well as their 'Mai Piu' / 'C'e Fango' single (both on Belgian label Veals & Geeks), were stand-out releases – those Seeds and Electric Prunes influences reverberating across the potent grooves. Despite vocals being in Italian, this will still draw you in deep.

It's evident that with each new release, however sporadic, Matteo, Pierpaolo and the guys gain an even stronger grasp of their songwriting craft; and how best to bottle the optimum feel and atmosphere for each selection. Some tasty, distinctly Who-ish goings on are also detectable throughout this latest album, which, as ever, comes packaged in Psych-Out's trademark heavy stock card sleeve.

Lenny Helsing

FERNANDO PERDOMO AND MATT TECU
Art
★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY CD/LP

It's always heart-warming when you see session musicians step up from behind the shadow of their mentors to head into the limelight, and this is exactly what we find with the new pairing of LA multi-instrumentalist and producer Fernando Perdomo and fellow Californian drummer Matt Tecu.

With their debut album impressively titled *Art*, here are two artists who originally collaborated on the Netflix LA music scene doc *Echo In The Canyon,* and who are absolutely at one with the music they play – Tecu having worked with Neil Young and Fiona Apple, Perdomo tagged as "the millennial answer to Todd Rundgren" by *LA Weekly* no less. *Art* is testament to their musical versatility as they sweep through a world of grooves, fusion, rock and prog while also finding a niche neatly adjacent to the *avant-garde*. Unsurprisingly leaning on instrumentals, this is a deep musical delight, combining past and present, and one that you can sink into.

Sarah Gregory

BILL FISHER
How To Think Like A Billionaire
★★★★

SEPTAPHONIC CD/LP

How To Think Like A Billionaire is the third album from The Church Of The Cosmic Skull's archdeacon Bill Fisher, and is his best solo outing to date.

Of the eight tracks, and despite an introduction that desperately wants to be 'Buick Mackane', only 'Yell Of The Ringman' sings from the same hymnbook as The Church. The rest of the album successfully marries English folk-prog to late '70s/early '80s west coast production values, a blend best exemplified by sub-three-minute gem 'Ride On, Unicorn', complete with Andrew Gold-style piano. 'Xanadu' could slot into Eric Carmen's *Boats Against The Currents*, 'Intranaut' Dennis Wilson's *Pacific Ocean Blue*, and 'Beast Of Man' could be a holdover from Midlake's *The Courage Of Others.* 'Overview Effect' comes from that super smooth yacht-rock album Peter Gabriel never made with Daniel Lanois. *How To Think Like A Billionaire* is a perfect jumping-on point for those unfamiliar with Fisher's work.

Peter Gallagher

Earth Tongue. Popcorn Satanist pop!

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

Hawkwind. Has their time come?

Returning Legends

HAWKWIND
Stories From Time And Space
★★★★

CHERRY RED CD/2-LP

Strange news from a distant star suggests Hawkwind's 50-plus years touring mission will end in 2024, and it doesn't take a rocket scientist to predict their recording career will soon follow suit. Captain of the ship Dave Brock is, as they say, "getting on a bit".

The title and resigned vocal of the melancholy, piano-led 'Our Lives Can't Last Forever' acknowledges this, and the titular craft in 'The Starship (One Life One Love)', bound for Galaxy 117, apparently "a place that sounds just like Heaven", sounds suspiciously like a hearse.

Brock might have one eye on his own mortality, but as this opening one-two demonstrates, age has withered his songwriting not one jot. For further proof, check out the hero of 'Traveller Of Time & Space', a blue-collar Joe tasked with depositing human waste into the sun. Running out of time they may be, but Hawkwind show no sign of running out of steam.

Peter Gallagher

PLASTICLAND
Spree
★★★★★

SCADILLAC LP

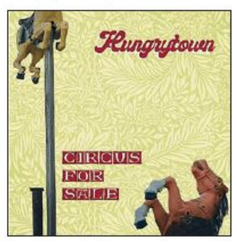
Back in the '80s nobody made music like Milwaukee's Plasticland – music that painted acid visions in a trippy coat of Anglophile psychedelia and new-wave vitality. It's now 2024 and still nobody makes music like Plasticland as they return with *Spree*, their first new music in 30 years.

Across 10 tracks of Stooge-ian riffing, not dissimilar to singer Glenn Rehse's solo project The Fabulon Triptometer, the songwriting is as surreal as ever with 'Tasting The Colours Of Sound', 'Don't Drop The Toad' and the self-explanatory 'Pink Fairies Motorcycle Club' highlights, all welded together with a Ladbroke Grove meets Detroit energy, the fragile, acoustic 'Out Of The Question' the sole exception. Rehse's vocals ooze hallucinatory menace, Leroy Buth lays down some intense guitar work and both bass player John Frankovic and drummer Victor Demichei make an appearance. The direction may be heavier, the world crazier, but the unique spirit of Plasticland continues to lead the way.

Richard Allen

HUNGRYTOWN
Circus For Sale
★★

BIG STIR CD



The fourth album from Vermont-based folk-pop duo Hungrytown finds them on Big Stir, surely music's happiest label.

'Feel Like Falling' starts with some finger-pickin' Americana, but by the 90-second mark we're on the Cabrillo Highway, headed for Big Sur, hair blowing in the wind. 'Tuesday Sun' and 'Little Bird' inhabit a similar groove, despite lyrics praying for rain and laced with melancholy respectively – so far, so sunshiny. A detour into British folk territory starts well with band original 'Man Of Poor Fortune', but this writer isn't convinced anyone needs another version of 'Green Grow The Laurels', and Bert Jansch, whose 'Morning Brings Peace Of Mind' is covered here, is a taste I've never acquired. Additionally, a couple of other numbers, such as the title track, left me cold, thus my rating. However, if you're up for some more 'Laurels' and think my Jansch statement sacrilege, feel free to slap another star on my two.

Peter Gallagher

ÌXTAHUELE
Pathways To Paradise
★★★★

SUBLIMINAL SOUNDS CD/LP

We live in musically blessed times. For every supposedly outdated genre, there's an act somewhere making that kind of music with panache. When it comes to exotica, Ìxtahuele are one of the most happening acts *du jour*. The Gothenburg-based band have been honing their brand of lounge-friendly tunes over the last decade and are now releasing a follow-up to 2021's *Eden Abhez's Dharmaland.*

Pathways To Paradise is an audio travelogue, evoking the imagined paradise of the South Sea Islands ('Moonflower'), Africa's vast swathes ('Zebra Limbo') and the calmness of a Chinese temple (Trembling Leaves'). There's even a hint of jeopardy on the closing track 'Komodo'. It's quirky and daft at times but the band have some serious chops, whichever instrument you choose to single out – keys, vibraphone, double bass or drums. If you're in need of some escapist fun, this is just the ticket. The perfect album for those golden hours in your tiki bar.

Duncan Fletcher

KARATE BOOGALOO
Hold Your Horses
★★★★

COLEMINE CD/LP

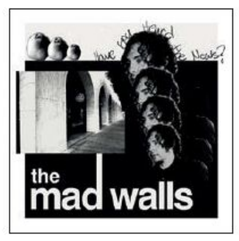
Born from the same Melbourne creative community that's given us a wealth of talent over the last few years, Karate Boogaloo are part of the same collective of artists that birthed Surprise Chef (Boogaloo bassist and producer Henry Jones shares production credits on the first two Surprise Chef albums).

Given the connection, it's hard not to draw musical comparisons between the two bands, but Karate Boogaloo mine a legacy of deep-funk and soul alongside their forays into David Axelrod-esque cinematic moods (as on opener 'All Aboard') that sends them off down different musical paths. Amongst many highlights, 'PS EmmyLou' takes the instrumental Memphis soul of Booker T & The MG's circa 'Melting Pot' and bakes it in the Australian sunshine, and 'One Hand One Bounce' is a brilliantly executed piece of soul that mixes Muscle Shoals vibes and the Studio 1 recordings of Jackie Mittoo into a glorious musical stew.

Paul Osborne

THE MAD WALLS
Have You Heard The News?
★★★★

BIG POTATO CD/LP



Formed in 2016, so far The Mad Walls (a vehicle for the far-out visions of Christopher Mercado) only had an EP and a single under their belt. Then again, The Mad Walls seem to have a peculiar sense of time, with a sound that rejects date stamps and whose spiritually belongs to the hazier side of late '60s trips, producing miniature songs that give the impression of stretching out over one long acid-fuelled dream.

Mercado has clearly spent a lot of time vibing with the likes of Skip Spence, Roky Erickson and Syd Barrett, and has fully absorbed their influences. Recorded in his garage, *Have You Heard the News?* blends hallucinogenic lo-fi and homespun psychedelia with warped folk and blues roots. The sonic collage it offers is chock-full of *Nuggets*-style brittle gems ('Who Wants To Die For Religion', 'Apples'), at once whimsical, druggy and eerie.

Camilla Aisa

MARTIN SAVAGE AND THE JIGGERZ
Martin Savage And The Jiggerz
★★★

DAMAGED GOODS LP

Featuring the rhythm section of King Salami & The Cumberland Three alongside their friend, Sweden's Martin Savage, this is the self-titled debut album from this freshly minted combo.

Featuring hi-octane garage-rock, packed with energy and catchy hooks, this collection of songs barely pauses to take breath as it rattles along swimmingly to its lo-fi conclusion. 'Mailman Blues' give some old Chuck Berry riffs a good kicking and 'Out Of This World' feels like

Continues over

Peter Hook & The Light

THURSDAY 17TH
OCTOBER 2024
PARR HALL WARRINGTON

FRIDAY 1ST
NOVEMBER 2024
ST GEORGE'S HALL
BRADFORD

THURSDAY 7TH
NOVEMBER 2024
CHEESE & GRAIN FROME

FRIDAY 8TH
NOVEMBER 2024
TRAMSHED CARDIFF

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04 OCT SUNDERLAND FIRE STATION
05 OCT EDINBURGH QUEENS HALL
06 OCT HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME
08 OCT CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION
09 OCT MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2
10 OCT NEW BRIGHTON FLORAL PAVILION
11 OCT WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN
12 OCT CARDIFF TRAMSHED
14 OCT BATH KOMEDIA
15 OCT PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL
16 OCT LONDON O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE

GUN

HOMBRES

+SPECIAL GUESTS

KiraMac

BARRELL

WED, DEC 4 — SCALA, LONDON
THUR, DEC 5 — KK'S STEEL MILL, WOLVS'
FRI, DEC 6 — ACADEMY 2, MANCHESTER
SAT, DEC 7 — SWX, BRISTOL
SUN, DEC 8 — THE BROOK, SOUTHAMPTON
TUE, DEC 10 — BRUDENELL, LEEDS
WED, DEC 11 — WYLAM BREWERY, NEWCASTLE

UNDERTONES

OCTOBER 2024 and friends

Thursday 10 Liverpool Hangar 34*
Friday 11 Sunderland Fire Station*
Saturday 12 Sheffield Leadmill*

* RUTS DC

Thursday 17 Lincoln Engine Shed+
Friday 18 Norwich Epic+
Saturday 19 Wolverhampton Kk's+

+THE REZILLOS

Thursday 24 Frome Cheese & Grain#
Friday 25 London Camden Electric Ballroom#
Saturday 26 Southampton 1865# #

PETE WYLIE
THE MIGHTY WAH!

LLOYD COLE

SATURDAY 14 SEPTEMBER
THE APEX - BURY ST EDMUNDS

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER
THEATRE SEVERN - SHREWSBURY

THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER
LOWTHER PAVILION - LYTHAM

Johnny Thunders with the brakes off. The lyrics reek of anxiety and frustration, particularly on 'In The Eyes Of A Blind Man', with its meditations on class backed by some wailing harmonica and a sterling performance from the rhythm section. There's a brief break from the sonic intensity for the slower chugging 'Down The Line' but the meat of the performance lies in punky, stinging rock 'n' roll that just leaps off the tape.

Henry Hutton

JASON McNIFF
Everything's A Song
★★★★

TOMBOLA CD

Intimate moments in the lives of three couples: the first aboard a bus near Mount Sinai, the second free of an old life but uncertain of the future, the third about to marry. It could be a Raymond Carver short story collection. In fact, these vignettes form the lyric of 'Song Of Everything', the opening track on this impressive new collection from Jason McNiff.

Lyrically ambitious, the songs are further distinguished by elegant fingerpicking and McNiff's sombre voice. Despite a cover of Italian protest anthem 'Bella Ciao', the music draws mostly from the US. There's a back porch feel to 'These Dreams Of You', a touch of Dylan to 'No Good For You' and a country swing to 'Everything's A Song'. McNiff's filtering of American sounds through British sensibilities is most apparent on 'My Mississippi', a Huckleberry Finn-inspired tale of journeying along the River Thames. Embellished by Richard Moore's superb violin, these literate and heartfelt songs are a companionable pleasure.

Clive Webb

WINTER McQUINN
Move To The Trees
★★★★

THIRD EYE STIMULI CD/LP

Solo album number two from Sunfruits man Winter McQuinn shifts away from the Cambridge/Canterbury-hued psych-pop of the Aussie songwriter's debut to a sort of slacker/folk-rock/powerpop hybrid.

Short and sweet at 29 minutes, hushed vocals and creamy melodies float over flinty 1969-vintage Beatles licks and featherlight picking. There's an overall theme of getting back to the land. The laidback electric/acoustic grit and chime of the opening 'Daffodil' sets out the stall well, while the airy, early Wings-like 'Red Wool' is bucolic – but sounds quietly anxious about the world ("Who's to know if the world will ever be okay?," croons McQuinn). Top pick is the contemplative 'Time Passes By', with its clocklike metronomic finger-picking and lazy, insidious melody. "Things you dig are never aligned with the things you need and the current time," he sings, but it must be said, he sounds rightfully pretty content with his current bag.

Martin Ruddock

MODIFIED MAGIC
Modified Magic
★★★

LIBRARY OF THE OCCULT LP

The striking artwork on the cover – courtesy of Nathaniel Hebert – perfectly sets the mood. Dark magic performed by black caped types shrouded in fog in the middle of the woods? Yes, eerie isn't enough: propelled by crashing drums and gloomy synth and guitar textures, Adam Ramirez's Modified Magic goes straight for the menacing.

Sound and vision seem to be of equal importance here, as each track invites listeners to attach their own personal nightmares (doomsday-worthy hallucinations, possibly) to the thunderous, cathartic sonics. This eponymous debut shows the influence of bad trip psychedelia and *giallo* and horror soundtracks (particularly on highlight 'Espionage'). But unlike other Library Of The Occult offerings, *Modified Magic*'s ties with the vintage seem to be merely formative – the sound remains rooted in the present and quickly reveals a penchant for the smouldering grandeur of post-rock, losing some of the timeless allure of retrodelic creeps in the process.

Camilla Aisa

RAYVELLES
Rayvelles
★★★★

FUNK NIGHT LP

In his spare time, Fergal McBride runs Echo Ray Studio in North London with Tuck Nelson. During lockdown, they decided to start making music together. What they've conjured up on this debut album feels deceptively like the work of old hands.

There's a hip-hop sensibility to the heavy breakbeats on opener 'Return Of The Soul Sabre', reminiscent of El Michels Affair or The Budos Band. In fact, this instrumental is crying out for a Wu-Tang Clan makeover. All the instrumentals here have cool sample-ready breaks and beats but the icing on the cake is the vocal tracks. Marietta Smith of Smith & The Honey Badgers and The Allergies sings on the soulful 'Tumblin' Down' and 'Nothing But Reasons'; Anice Ossoulian appears on 'One Black Candle'. The boys evidently love their vintage gear and have played pretty much everything on the record bar the horns. A classy and assured debut.

Paul Ritchie

KEN SHARP
Welcome To Toytown
★★★★

JET FIGHTER CD/LP

Ken Sharp has long adhered to the "less is more" principle, and his eighth album is no exception. The guy who, three years ago, released his mini (literally) masterpiece *Miniatures* – 32 tracks of sugary baroque-pop weighing in an average of one minute each – has returned to a similar format, with a familiar musical palette. For anyone unsure what that means, it incorporates everyone from Brian Wilson to Marc Bolan at their twee-est and sweetest, pop at its most poptastic.

This time we get 41 tracks, one titled 'Beach Boys On My Stereo', which tells you where Ken is coming from. But the centrepiece is 'Toytown Suite' a kind of condensed pop opera that clocks in at almost (gasp) 10 minutes. It tells the tale of a toymaker who is cruelly deposed, and how that impacts on the poor kids who don't get the presents they wanted. Utterly bonkers, but consistently beguiling and overflowing with pop thrills throughout.

Chris Twomey

silver biplanes
Travelling By Candlelight
★★★★

WIAIWYA LP

silver biplanes' second consists of eight originals and four silver-themed songs originally considered for an EP. 'Silver Moon' jettisons the Nashville twang of the Mike Nesmith original, Hawkwind's 'Silver Machine' is sloppy but cool, ditto the adventurous up-tempo truncated reading of La Dusseldorf's 'Silver Cloud'. In contrast, the biplanes' take on Hamilton Streetcar's 'Silver Wings' doesn't fly too far from the original.

Even amidst such illustrious company the new songs stand tall. The Streetcar vibe bleeds into first single 'Radiogram' (think 'Invisible People'), but hereafter many of the originals take their cue from the '80s. The title track, for example, is reminiscent of a mellow B-52's or perhaps a folky Voice Of The Beehive, and I defy anyone not to think OMD upon hearing 'Broken Instruments'. I'm not even going to try pigeonhole 'Before The Sunset', it's just a shimmering slice of guitar-pop gorgeousness.

Peter Gallagher

THE STRANGE ENCOUNTERS
All In The Mind
★★★★

PORTS OF CALL CD/LP

We're often caught in a time-warp when talking about new bands here, aren't we? But that's okay. When it comes to retro vibes it's not about what you know, but who you wanted to know.

So, here's the first album from German-based duo Strange Encounters, which the press release describes as "jangly folk, blues and rock 'n' roll from the psychedelic heart of Berlin" – and it certainly is all of that. Core members, drummer Guido Kreutzmuller and Glaswegian singer/guitarist Joe Armstrong, clearly have a shared passion for the best parts of all those genres, including The Byrds, Jayhawks, Beatles and even the often-overlooked World Party, and do a fantastic job of filtering these influences into convincing new shapes. Silky-voiced Armstrong carries the pleasingly melodic 12-song set through a series of escapist *faux*-Americana head trips, to some more earthly, uplifting (power) pop treats. A good starting point for the curious might be the Merseybeat-inspired 'Thinkin'/Drinkin', available to YouTube viewers everywhere.

Chris Twomey

KELLEY STOLTZ
La Fleur
★★★★

DANDY BOY CD/LP

In which our favourite US Indie Madman backs away from the trappings and clings steadfastly to his first love – flinging us what could well have been the missing Echo & The Bunnymen LP. This should be perfectly clear from the opening notes of 'Human Events', which contain a direct quote from 'Over The Wall'. I'm not sure what else you might need.

In other words, he's done it again, but differently. Kelley has been sitting at the piano for a long time (and behind the drums,

Continues over

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OCT 10 KENDAL
OCT 11 CHESTER
OCT 12 SOUTHAMPTON
OCT 14 BRIGHTON
OCT 15 GLOUCESTER
OCT 16 BATH
OCT 18 STOCKTON
OCT 19 LEEDS
OCT 20 CARLISLE
OCT 23 GATESHEAD
OCT 24 LINCOLN
OCT 25 NORWICH
OCT 27 READING
OCT 28 CARDIFF
OCT 29 SOUTHPORT
DEC 14 GLASGOW - QMU

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24:09 SOUTHPORT ATKINSON
26:09 CARLISLE OLD FIRE STATION
27:09 GLASGOW ORAN MOR
03:10 LEEDS BRUDENELL
04:10 HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME
05:10 BURY MET THEATRE
07:10 BURY ST EDMUNDS THE APEX
09:10 LINCOLN DRILL
10:10 WALSALL ARENA
11:10 RUGBY BENN HALL
21:10 CARDIFF TRAMSHED
22:10 GLOUCESTER GUILDHALL
23:10 NEWBURY ARLINGTON ARTS
24:10 ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL

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NOVEMBER
20 READING SUB 89*
21 LEEDS OLD WOOLLEN*
22 EDINBURGH QUEEN'S HALL*
23 SUNDERLAND FIRE STATION*
24 LEEK FOXLOWE ARTS
26 BRISTOL EXCHANGE
27 SOUTHAMPTON THE BROOK*
28 CAMDEN ELECTRIC BALLROOM*
29 MANCHESTER ACADEMY*
30 NORTHAMPTON ROADMENDER*

DECEMBER
01 GRIMSBY DOCKS ACADEMY
03 YORK CRESCENT
04 CHESTER LIVE ROOMS
05 CARDIFF GLOBE

* as special guests to Hugh Cornwell

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Phil Lip Sayce

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21 · Leeds Brudenell
22 · Gateshead The Glasshouse
23 · Glasgow Oran Mor
25 · Manchester BOTW
26 · Nottingham Metronome
28 · Bristol Fleece
30 · Southampton 1865

DECEMBER
3 · Colchester Arts
4 · London Islington Assembly Hall

Special Guest
TROY REDFERN

PLANET ROCK WHERE ROCK LIVES

Photo: Manuela Langotsch

backing Robyn Hitchcock at a theatre near you), but this is nevertheless a very welcome guitar album. You remember guitars. *La Fleur* is a sparkly set that, like much of Kelley's best work, still manages to bring the dark. You've already heard the based-on-a-true-story 'Reni's Car' (yes, *that* Reni) from earlier this year. And now you've got this. Don't waste it.
Mike Fornatale

SUN ATLAS
Return To The Spirit
★★★★
MOCAMBO LP

There's a thick cloud of mystery surrounding Sun Atlas. No names to officially associate the LA-based collective with, no faces to study (similarly to kindred spirits Goat, they have a thing for masks and costumes). Like the music the group plays, the intriguing crypticism suggests that the whole is more than the sum of its already excellent parts.

The sound of Sun Atlas reveals communal tendencies with strong mystical traits, as the titles picked for this debut LP's tracks make clear from the beginning. *Return To The Spirit* stands at the crossroads of spiritual jazz and cinematic funk (perfectly exemplified on highlights such as 'Phases Of The Moon' and the title track), producing cooly psychedelic instrumentals with a strong foot-hold rooted both in vintage soundtracks and in contemporary breaks. The steelpan-fuelled 'Message From The Snakes' enters Afrobeat territory, while the synthedelic 'The Source' brings forth cosmic sci-fi grooves.
Camilla Aisa

VALLEY LODGE
Shadows In Paradise
★★★★★
TEE PEE DIGITAL

Shadows In Paradise is the fifth long player by NYC powerpop collective Valley Lodge, back after a six-year hiatus. Despite that title, all we're hearing is pure pop sunshine.

'Daylights' is an instant classic balancing the furious fretwork of Rick Nielsen with Big Star at their sweetest, and 'I Wrote A Song' springs from the traps like a '60s girl group gem before morphing into something Bolan-esque, frontman Dave Hill even doing a vocal approximation of Marc's signature guitar sound. Two songs in and we're sold. 'After School' has Richard Hell joining The Rubinoos, more Big Star harmonies bubble through 'Out Of Time', and there's a rather splendid wailing banshee guitar thing going on throughout 'Doorstep'. Meanwhile, 'Dirty Dishes' is the most perfect song you ever heard drifting across the beach from a distant transistor radio on the best summer holiday of your teens. An essential purchase for powerpop lovers everywhere.
Peter Gallagher

VARIOUS ARTISTS
So Many Things At Once
★★★★
6612 TAPES CASSETTE

Members of The High Water Marks (included) assembled this exclusive compilation of tasteful covers and unique originals featuring an assortment of like-minded musicians gathered for a cause in support of the upcoming US elections.

Several Elephant 6 veterans add their special sauce of eclectic pop, the always impressive Rose Melberg (Go Sailor/Softies) delivers a perky take on The Housemartins' 'Sheep', and the Late BP Helium evokes that sweet California sunshine vibe on a great remake of Honeybus's 'Fresher Than The Sweetness In Water.' Mikal Cronin's dirge-march 'Light Anew' breaks from the occasional garagey surroundings, while The Natvral's Pogues-meets-Dylan singalong shanty 'Pink Wine' and The Garment District's synth-tastic floor-filler 'A Street Called Finland (Remix)' are welcome additions to their discographies. A live Ladybug Transistor treat, Elf Power covering fellow E6-ers Olivia Tremor Control, and the mysterious Spectral Roomates' fuzzy Raveonettes pop complete this special package.
Jeff Penczak

WARRINGTON-RUNCORN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Your Community Hub
★★★★
CASTLES IN SPACE CD/LP

Album four from WRNTDP (AKA Gordon Chapman-Fox) continues digging into the New Towns movement through a mix of analogue synths, town planning and truly fantastic design work.

WRNTDP's inspired retro electronica sometimes evokes Jarre or Vangelis, but is its own beast – beautifully constructed, almost ambient in places and bordering on industrial in others. Opener 'A Shared Sense Of Purpose' starts with almost pastoral ping-ponging chimes before exploding into something harder and more vivid, while the martial bass squelches of 'Rapid Transport Links' give way to a sweeping travelogue that has you almost counting the bus stops. *Your Community Hub* is nostalgic for a (slightly) more optimistic age but palpably angry at how communities and their services have been decimated by austerity and bean-counting. We can enjoy the gorgeous hauntological synths and oddly soothing analogue hiss, but sometimes we need music like this to remind ourselves of what we've lost.
Martin Ruddock

WATER BALLOON HEAD
Water Balloon Head
★★★
BANDCAMP

Mysterious to the point of yielding precisely zero Google search results, Water Balloon Head may be a band, a duo or an individual – it's genuinely hard to tell. What we do know is that their Bandcamp page places them in New London, Connecticut, and that this is their first album.

Opener 'You're There' is stuffed full of clues: a jagged 12-string Rickenbacker riff straight out of The Byrds' 1966 box, bouncy 'Taxman' bass and a monotone vocal. 'Satisfior' comes on like a mini-Spiritualised channelling '60s garage after having bought their first phaser pedal. 'The One In 6' waltzes around the kind of melodies Todd Rundgren brought to Nazz's gentler moments. By the time we reach strung-out closer 'Haabaa', the pace has slowed to a crawl, guitars are turned up to nine and J Mascis has entered the room. It's stoned, DIY indie-pop with psychedelic edges but doesn't quite possess enough personality to set it apart from the herd.
Andy Morten

THE WOGGLES
Time Has Come
★★★
WICKED COOL CD/LP

Veteran US garage-rock practitioners The Woggles – now boasting the recent-ish addition of Prisoners/Solar Flares/Gaolers guitarist Graham Day in their ranks – return with their 11th album since their 1987 beginnings.

Much lively fare can be heard across these 12 tracks, from the mod-style eloquence of 'Her Majesty's Pleasure', the cheesy, B-52's/Cramps-like rock 'n' roll party trick 'Do The Slug', some hard beat melodics as evidenced on the title track, 'Hole In My Heart' and 'Toad In The Hole'; most executed with a keen sense of urgency and fun. Individual and collective energy levels rarely, if ever, drop long enough for anyone to draw breath – much like their on-stage presence. That said, despite such a powerful display – helped out by a litany of guest guitarists throughout – the album as a whole is rather indistinct in places, a number of its selections tending to blur into one another.
Lenny Helsing

The Woggles. Still slugging it out

WONDER 45
Wonderiland
★★★
BIG AC LP

Wonder 45 are a London-based soul ensemble and this is their debut album. 'Cry' is a desolate plea for mercy. Each line laid bare, punctuated by heavy brass and impassioned vocals. It's a dramatic way to open an album but sets the tone.

'Round And Round' has a softer emotional release with a laidback Willie Mitchell/Al Green feel to the music. 'Superman' sounds a bit lumpy or forced by comparison – the adage "less is more" springs to mind. The gritty title track is much better, leaving plenty of air for the groove to breathe in. It was released as a single on Germany's Golden Rules label with *Blues & Soul* magazine raving that it sounded, "like a 21st century Joe Cocker". Elsewhere, the up-tempo 'Make It Happen' has a modern, feelgood sheen. The band seem more at home when things get mellow. If you like Stone Foundation, chances are you'll enjoy the wonders of Wonder 45.
Paul Ritchie

WORLDCUB
Back To The Beginning
★★★★
RECORDIAU RATL CD

"You've been away too long," sing Welsh psych-poppers Worldcub on 'Look Through The Keyhole', four songs into their debut album. It's a lyric that could well be self-referencing as it's been eight years since brothers Cynyr and Dion Hamer released *Fforesteering* under previous group moniker CaStLeS. Evidence suggests they've kept themselves busy in the interim.

Back To The Beginning is a fun and trippy affair, which merges North Walian psychedelia

with Afrobeat and a Brian Wilson-esque understanding of layering and harmony. Worldcub's approach to recording (unhurried and DIY in their own studio on a Snowdonia hillside) means there's plenty of experimental textures, softly sung vocals, cliché-free beats, and an outsider's sense of pleasing yourself first. Citing Nigerian funk musician William Onyeabor as a key influence, along with western pop masterminds Brian Wilson and Paul McCartney, the Hamer brothers' year zero reinvention reaches for new ground while offering up a raft of pervasive melodies.
Duncan Fletcher

YEA-MING & THE RUMOURS
I Can't Have It All
★★★★★

DANDY BOY CD/LP

For nearly a decade Yea-Ming Chen and her Rumours have been releasing easy, breezy pop tunes with a jingle jangle here, a toe tap there, and Chen's soothing vocals on top. Their third album continues in this wholesome happy direction.

The title track is a fine dose of sleepy Mazzy Star-indebted Americana with gentle hints of Camera Obscura. 'Ruby' is a perky rant about society's constant attempts to create the perfect image of femininity, destroying many a woman's self-esteem in the process. Weeping lap steel (Eóin Galvin) glides through 'I Tried To Hide' and the shuffling 'Somebody's Daughter'; 'Before I Make It Home' is a catchy, country cuddle-up; 'Can We Meet In The Middle' has that nostalgic vibe we loved so much from Alex Taylor/Motorcycle Boy and the rest is pure-pop perfection with a melancholic edge. Sublime and eminently playable.
Jeff Penczak

LOS YESTERDAYS
Frozen In Time
★★★★

NOW-AGAIN LP

This shot of retro Chicano soul from the fertile melting pot of East LA is a dream listen from start to finish. So much about the production, songwriting and instrumentation of Los Yesterdays feels like a fabulously executed throwback to the residual echoes of vintage doo-wop, Spector-esque '60s pop and classic Latin garage-soul.

Los Yesterdays' warm audio palette of horns, harmonica, guitar, organ, vibes, heartfelt vocals and soulful arrangements evokes floods of hazy memories of distant and fondly remembered summers. So much so that the quality of the performances feels like re-recordings of long forgotten oldies from way back. Whether on 'Nobody's Clown', 'Name On Me', 'Love Is A Game For Fools' or the title track, time after time Los Yesterdays prove they have a special way of bringing to life the bittersweet mood of times long gone.
Grahame Bent

Altın Gün. They haven't got a Merve
PHOTO: SANJA MARUSIC

ALTIN GÜN
Vallahi Yok / Kırık Cam
★★★

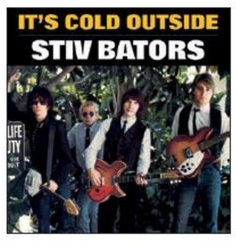
GLITTERBEAT

Eight years after they first came together, Altın Gün are at the forefront of a continuously growing scene paying tribute to and updating the legacy of late '60s and early '70s Turkish psychedelia. They've been doing so with enough inventiveness and enthusiasm to hone their own recognisable sound – a blend of Anatolian rock, deep-funk and world groove psych that's proved shape-shifting, globetrotting and freewheeling.

In such spirit, 'Vallahi Yok' opens a digital single that marks an important moment in the life of the Amsterdam-based sextet: this is the last recording to feature singer Merve Daşdemir (who, back when the band was forming, was famously recruited thanks to a Facebook ad). With the bubbling, slowly creeping synths of B-side 'Kırık Cam' taking things towards an '80s-inspired atmosphere, it will be interesting to see what different paths both Daşdemir and the now five-piece will follow.
Camilla Aisa

STIV BATORS
It's Cold Outside / The Last Year
★★★★

MUNSTER



Well known for his efforts as the frontman for punk legends The Dead Boys, Bator's work took a spin in a different direction when he signed for Greg Shaw's Bomp! label as he flirted with powerpop, reveling in the skinny tie and shades aesthetic, alongside musicians toting Rickenbacker and Vox guitars.

This is a reissue of his first single on the label and consists of a cover of 'It's Cold Outside', originally released in 1966 by Cleveland garage-pop act The Choir, and 'The Last Year' written by Bators and Frank Secich (under the pseudonym Jeff Jones). The A-side follows the award-winning formula touted by Ramones, amongst others, of keeping things tight but simple with some rough-edged guitar, surfy backing vocals and rigorous hand clapping, not forgetting a "crunching gearbox" key change. The flip has a punky but melodic Tin Pan Alley pop feel with some entertaining background guitar work.
Henry Hutton

ANDY BOWN
Tarot / Lulli Rides Again
★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY

After The Herd crumbled in mid-1968, keyboard player/singer/songwriter Andy Bown formed prog-pop supergroup Judas Jump and, without fanfare, wrote and recorded 'Tarot', the theme tune to kids' supernatural TV series *Ace Of Wands*. What could've been a throwaway ended up a powerhouse of post-psychedelic pop with all the trimmings: elliptical lyrics, fey vocals, haunted Mellotron and percussive acoustic guitar.

Lesser-known instrumental flipside 'Lulli Rides Again' inhabits the same territory – its slow, churning groove and layers of 'tron and brass, and pounding drum breaks could've soundtracked a scene in *Ace Of Wands* or any other oddball TV drama at the time. A mainstay of compilations, 'Tarot' sees its first ever reissue on 45 now, 54 years later, complete with Piper Gates-designed picture cover. Grab it now while you can.
Andy Morten

DREAMWAVE
Dreamwave And The Mindcave EP
★★★★

VELVET ECHOES

The debut 12-inch from this youthful Bristol quartet features six tracks of prime 21st century psych, leading off with the mid-paced freak groove of 'En Traverse'. Following in the sonic footsteps of Hookworms and The Lucid Dream, Dreamwave bludgeon the senses with furious fuzz guitar, pulsing bass and barked, reverb-laden vocals.

'Mindcave' is a racing, bracing blitz of melody and noise with more of an international feel: think King Gizzard, Oh Sees, even a tripped-out Skids. The dreamy 'Hidden Sun' slips into shoegaze territory, while 'Void' reverts to slashing, urgent type, an insistent sequencer glimmering through the spiralling garage riffs. 'Bungle In The Psych Jungle' keeps things cooking before 'Daydrifting' brings us gently back to earth, an uplifting number with a Balearic sunrise feel. Dreamwave seem to have all bases covered, and although they haven't quite found their own voice yet, they've certainly got the chops to be contenders.
Ben Graham

THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS
Lovin' You Ain't Easy / We're Dancin' ('Til It Blows Over)

★★★★

OUTER BATTERY

Here's an idea: Take four guys from the US alt-rock and post-punk scenes and have them dream up a series of 45s that homage their favourite cult artists of the past.

First up, two tracks by French-Canadian hero Michel Pagliaro. 'Lovin' You Ain't Easy' remains Pagliaro's calling card, the 1971 single that saw chart action in Canada and the UK and has joined the hallowed ranks of classic proto-powerpop outings by Badfinger, Big Star and The Raspberries. The Correspondents' take is note-perfect – every guitar part, drum fill and harmony vocal faithfully reproduced with skill and attention to detail. 'We're Dancin'', originally released under the pseudonym Second Helping in '72, showcases Pagliaro's rock tendencies, welding Led Zep riffage to a '60s pop chorus. This beautifully presented 45 comes in four different era-specific picture covers. We await the next instalment with bated breath.

Andy Morten

GARBOS CELLULOID HEROES
Only Death Is Fatal / Won't You Come To My Funeral

★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY

What's a decade in music? When it's 1968 to '78 it might as well be a lifetime, as any '60s survivors trying to reinvent themselves in the post-punk era unfortunately discovered.

Garbos Celluloid Heroes (apostrophes are for squares!) were led by Chris Evans of toytown-psych nearly-men The World Of Oz, and the high, bleating vocals and crunching guitars of 'Only Death Is Fatal' are more bovver-glam than punk, with a tight, bouncy sound similar to fellow old dogs in new clothing, Radio Stars. Flipside 'Won't You Come To My Funeral', was a more natural fit for the band, piano-led art-pop with a swooning Cockney Rebel feel; distinctly dated in '78 but, like the A-side, highly enjoyable on its own terms today. On both songs, the very qualities that would've been deemed camp and inauthentic, evidence that these professed punks were over-30 imposters, are what make them fun and interesting now.

Ben Graham

THE MANDELBROT SHAKES
Searching EP

★★★★

LEAD MINE

When confronted with the output of the vast majority of the two-piece combos that have emerged in the wake of The White Stripes' phenomenal success, this writer's usual knee-jerk response is to wax lyrical about the wonders of the bass guitar and to wonder how hard the duo must be to work with if they can't find a regular bassist.

Not so with this particular garage-trash-blues act, though, for the formidable racket generated by Letty Gallagher and Julian Wells overrides any such sentiments. Title track 'Searching' is all guitar bleed, primal riffs, backwards touches and Letty's anguished howls. 'Bothering Me' is a Cramps-y yelp of such rage that you almost feel sorry for the schmuck it's directed at, while 'Mad Fuckers' is a filthy blues blast about bar-room gobshites who refuse to let you have a quiet pint, and 'Dustbowl' is a short, sharp spooky surf shock.

Hugh Dellar

Back To The Garden

HANFORD FLYOVER
The Garden Of Earthly Delights / You Can Never Come Down

★★★★

nick nicely
Mike Call Is Calling / Wonderful Day

★★★

THE SAND PEBBLES
Sometimes A Great Notion / Desire Lines

★★★

ANTON BARBEAU
Dogstar / Queen Of Eyes

★★★★

ALL FRUITS DE MER

Fruits de Mer's June releases welcome new faces to their stable with Oz legends (and *Neighbours* scripters) The Sand Pebbles joining three other regular contributors. Hanford Flyover (Holly and Josh Bowler) body swerve their dreamy down-tempo comfort zone with two United States Of America covers, a straightforward run through electronic synth heaven via the evergreen 'Garden Of Earthly Delights' and a more experimental freak-out melding USA and The Field Hippies' mind-blowing 'You Can Never Come Down.'

nicely's surreal concoctions (dig that picture sleeve!) have been challenging traditional electropop conventions for over 40 years (see 'Hilly Fields') with off-kilter pop songs couched in "difficult listening" arrangements. The punny ghost story 'Mike Call Is Calling' and its accompanying head-scratcher 'Wonderful Day' (which sounds like anything but) are no exceptions. The latter sounds like he's trying to escape a straitjacket by grasping for every effects button within reach whilst locked in a panic room.

Hanford Flyover's Josh and Holly Bowler

The aforementioned Pebbles split their time between penning award-winning soapers and crafting quirky prog/pop reminiscent of The Claypool Lennon Delirium. 'Sometimes A Great Notion' is a schizophrenic example of their craft from the latest album; the flip (not the Camera Obscura song) is from their previous like-minded release, but benefits from more harmonies and a motorik vibe that expands the palette.

Barbeau is so prolific almost everyone reading this must have something from his vast discography in their collection. 'Dogstar' (not to be confused with Psychic TV's Brian Jones tribute 'Godstar') features Country Joe & The Fish guitarist Barry Melton on wall-rattling guitar vibrations pummelling a typical Barbeau earwig melody. Yelps and hoo-wahs optional, but encouraged. Ant's songs have occasionally been compared to ex-Soft Boy Robyn Hitchcock's quirky pop extravaganzas, so his reading of 'Queen Of Eyes' is a welcome addition to the canon, with crystalline guitar jangles, echoey wah-wah atmosphere, and melancholic moodiness to the fore.

Jeff Penczak

THE NIGHT TIMES
I'm Leaving You / Tell Me

★★★★

DISQUES ROGUE

The LA five-piece are back after five years of doing something else, but on this evidence, it seems they've been gone so much longer.

'I'm Leaving You' beams in like something from the lost Los Angeles of the Electric Prunes, Banana Splits, and mad Charlie Manson, all fuzz guitar and Farfisa, and is that some big fat sax honking away in there too? The singer goes "wha-a-ow!" a lot, as if this is the most exciting thing he's ever heard, and while I can't vouch for that as I don't know exactly what he's heard, I can say it *is* pretty damn exciting. Do the Frug! Flipside 'Tell Me' is another '60s-styled stoater, and hey, isn't that Ray Manzarek on the middle eight? It isn't, on account of him being dead and all, unless those crazy kids have been at the Ouija board again.

Peter Gallagher

THE ON AND ONS
Looking Out Of A Mirror / Hey What's Going On?

★★★

DISQUES ROGUE

Formed by Glen Morris from The Screaming Tribesmen and his brother Brian in Sydney, and featuring Hoodoo Gurus and Minuteman member Clyde Bramley, The On

And Ons have already put out five LPs on Citadel and a single on Get Hip in their nine-year existence, though this is the first for Rogue.

'Looking Out Of A Mirror' is the more frenetic and upbeat of the two sides, with its recurring riff, harmony vocals and organ lines all dissolving midway through into a searing solo and then a slightly-delic meltdown before the band pick up the threads again and pound furiously onwards. The muscular garage-rock flip has a touch of powerpop jangle in its intro and a great outro that just about holds it together as it's starting to drift away into space. In between, it's solid harmony-laden AM radio rock for the ages.

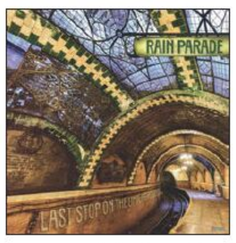
Hugh Dellar

RAIN PARADE

Last Stop On The Underground

★★★★

LABEL 5112-INCH



Last year's *Last Days Of A Dying Sun* was Paisley Underground heroes Rain Parade's first studio album in 38 years. Brimming with memorable, inspired moments, it felt more like the beginning of a new chapter than the return-for-its-own-sake gear some beloved bands will often offer.

The impression is reinforced by the fact that, helmed by Matt Piucci and Steven Roback, Rain Parade have soon returned to the studio, recording three more songs that this new EP pairs with a *Last Days* leftover. The four tracks that make up *Last Stop On The Underground* are Rain Parade at their most soothing, mellow and sweetly pensive, the familiar ingredients (chiming guitars, crystalline melodies, caressing vocals) not weathered but made all the more poignant by time and maturity. 'Surprise Surprise', with its echoes of Felt, is the instant stand-out, a radiant new favourite in the Parade canon.

Camilla Aisa

TAMESIS

Magna Mater EP

★★★

BANDCAMP

Tracing their roots to the depths of darkest Sussex, Tamesis cast themselves as time-warped voyagers with their cosmic take on acid-folk. Taking their name from the Celtic goddess of water and with the EP's title referencing the great mother deity of antiquity and her association with the eternal cycle of life, death and rebirth, Tamesis come immersed in a heady mix of mysticism, mythology, spirituality, new age thinking and latter-day hippiedom.

To quote the press release, *Magna Mater* sees Tamesis "recount the inevitable rebirth of the earth beyond the cyclical errors of

Continues over

tracks

CAMILLA AISA rounds up this month's digital downloads and stray oddities

YNYS bring you superpop, Welsh-style

We kick off our monthly selection of Tracks with a proper blast of superpop. Here's Welsh outfit **YNYS** delivering the kind of hooks-filled stomp the summer can't do without on '**Aros Amdanat Ti**', an earworm that evokes Electric Light Orchestra by way of Super Furry Animals.

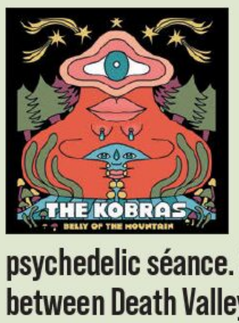
Another finely retrodelic delight? Yes please. Joshua Tree singer-songwriter **PEARL CHARLES** retraces her country roots with '**Smoke In The Limousine**', a beguiling number lulled by pensive fingerpicking, lush strings and the seductively wistful caress of a pedal steel.

A kindred sonic palette colours the next song, which takes us back to Wales. With '**Duw Neu Magic**', **GEORGIA RUTH** offers a soundtrack for long drives and wide-eyed skygazing. The promise of the title is perfectly fulfilled: there's some serious cinematic folk enchantment at play here.

A moving ode to dear ones lost to tragedy, **ORA COGAN**'s '**Ways Of Losing**' is a poignant slice of atmospheric *avant*-folk. The Canadian singer-songwriter's voice intertwines with that of Y La Bamba's Luz Elena Mendoza with gorgeously unearthly results.

Los Angeles chamber-pop auteur **ALEX IZENBERG** is ready to introduce his new accompanying band, The Exiles. '**Only The Moon Knows**' is absorbed in melancholic contemplation, rendered by vocals that bring to mind Randy Newman over sweet Americana-tinged indolence (while the lead guitar adds George Harrison-esque touches).

Canadian indie greats **NAP EYES** are back after a three year-long silence. It took some maturity to get '**Ice Grass Underpass**', which frontman Nigel Chapman started writing before the band even existed, perfectly right. The trademark Velvets-imbued cool and a deliciously squalling guitar suggest that it was totally worth the wait.



From the pulsing bass that introduces their new single it's clear that **THE KOBRAS** are here for a proper psychedelic séance. Sitting evenly between Death Valley Girls and Goat, '**Belly Of The Mountain**' channels singer Dessy Beva's Bulgarian folk roots, adding spiralling guitars and misty chants and delivering ecstatic electricity.

Drum roll, please! It's time for some retrodelic soulful pleasure. After years of lead vocal duties with Ephemerals,

WOLFGANG VALBRUN is ready to make his solo debut. With its classic soul stylings and commanding vocals, '**Cyclone**' is indeed an arresting introduction.

Jangly guitar-pop journeymen **THE BLACK WATCH** are clearly on a hot streak. A toothsome taste of their latest album, '**Oh Do Shut Up**' sports not only a perfect title but also the kind of pristine melody and gossamer, catchily sugary charm you would expect from a Sarah Records classic.

Keeping on with the ever-lovely marriage of jangle and heavenly vocals, we find a new sugar-coated delicacy from **SUSAN JAMES**, '**Run + Fall**'. Picture, if you will, Carly Simon teaming up with The Bangles for a heart-on-its-sleeve homage to 12-stringed '60s melodic pop. Sweet, huh?

Some 40 years after he started making brooding neo-psych with The Perfect Disaster, **PHILIP PARFITT** has evolved into a skilled writer of emotionally potent songs with gothic strokes. A dance between the affecting murmur of the vocals and the atmospheric interjections of a trumpet makes '**Broken**' a seductive autumnal affair.

humanity serving both as a warning of the past and a herald for hope and the power of springtime". With a sound that marries atmospheric widescreen folk balladry with occasional acid-rock tendencies, *Magna Mater's* five tracks see Tamesis blending ethereal vocals and mesmeric calming waves of sound with explosive interludes of psych guitar.

Grahame Bent

TRABANTS

Mantra / Surfers On Acid

★★★★

HYPNOTIC BRIDGE

You'd assume that a band named after a vintage vehicle would share some its characteristics. The East German communist era car was seen by westerners as pleasingly quirky, but also stubbornly outdated and unreliable. Trabants the band make music that's equally as idiosyncratic, but I'd argue they're defiantly retro as opposed to outdated. Unreliable? Certainly not.

Driven by bandleader Eric Penna, the LA instrumentalists' latest 45 straddles the lines between surf, garage-rock and psychedelia. 'Mantra' starts with a third-eye-opening guitar riff before what could be a traditional east European folk melody kicks in. All the while, sheet-metal guitars fade in and out of the mix. Over on the flip 'Surfers On Acid' has more of a frantic urgency, with biting guitar tones playing silk road psych over rumbling bass and drums. Think Dick Dale with a heavy lysergic dose. Drive on boys, this is quite the ride.

Duncan Fletcher

PM WARSON

Right Here, Last Night / Retrace The Steps

★★★

FYND

Along with the likes of Nick Waterhouse, PM Warson is one of the leading lights on the modern day R&B scene. In fact, the likeness between the bespectacled two is uncanny. In anticipation of his third long-player, Warson has recorded a new 45, distributed by Acid Jazz.

Both sides of 'Right Here, Last Night' sound naggingly familiar, such is Warson's penchant for authenticity, cut live to tape. The title track is a driving blues led number guaranteed to get hips swivelling and feet gliding across the dancefloor. 'Retrace The Steps' is a bluesy, Stax-like instrumental. Driven along by jazz percussion, steamy sax lines and an organ groove straight out of the Booker T Jones songbook. The coolest part of this track must be the tight high-hat drumming pattern which recalls Toussaint L McCall's organ grinder and mod favourite 'Shimmy'. One for the deejay box for sure.

Paul Ritchie

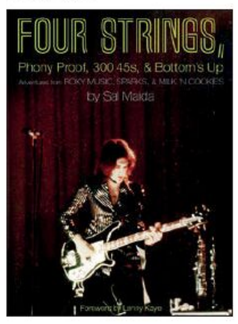
"Who are these people?" Owen Elliot in her mama's garden in 1968
PHOTO: HENRY DILTZ

FOUR STRINGS, PHONY PROOF, 300 45S & BOTTOMS UP

Sal Maida

★★★★

HOZAC



So, I'm in a bar with Sal Maida and it's clear I'm not going to get a word in. "You're right," I attempt to say, "musically, in their heyday the Alice Cooper group could hold their own against anyone." "Spot on," I interject uselessly, "'Metal Guru' is indeed T Rex's best single." But it's too late. Sal's already off on another story...

A confession, readers. I'm not in a bar with Maida, but in this third edition of his memoir, he writes urgently and engagingly, just as if his readers were. And like any typical pub conversation, he isn't concerned with linear narrative. He kicks off in Santa Monica on Hogmanay 1976, but by chapter two he's in London in '69. His childhood in Little Italy doesn't rear its head until page 95.

But what tales he tells! There's his time in Roxy Music, Milk 'n' Cookies and Sparks, of course, but here he is ringing McCartney's doorbell, fresh off the plane from NYC. Now he's popping up on Bob Calvert's *Lucky Leif & The Longships*. Now he's forming an all-new band with the Mael brothers and Mick Ronson (Ronno bailed, alas).

In the mid-section he reviews his 300 favourite 45s – only one per artist – and he ends by sharing his thoughts on the many bass players that inspired him. Both are written with passion and had me constantly referring to YouTube.

We may never meet Sal Maida in a bar, but pour yourself a brew, settle back, and prepare to be regaled.

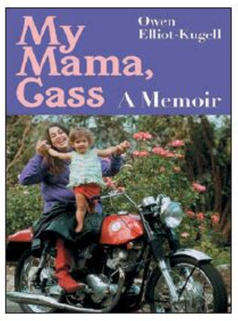
Peter Gallagher

MY MAMA, CASS: A MEMOIR

Owen Elliot-Kugell

★★★★

OMNIBUS PRESS



Owen Elliot-Kugell's abiding love for her mom Cass Elliot leaps from every page of this heartfelt memoir.

Born a couple of months before The Monterey Pop Festival, Owen's words lay bare the anguish caused by Cass's death in July 1974 after completing a run of solo shows at The London Palladium, which changed her then seven-year-old daughter's life forever. Central to the book are Owen's attempts to come to terms with the loss of her famous mom and her continued efforts to keep her memory alive including the unveiling of Cass's star on Hollywood Boulevard's Walk Of Fame in 2022.

Owen's early years, which coincided with the height of The Mamas & The Papas' worldwide fame, are rich in anecdote and detail. Telling Cass's story from her Baltimore childhood through her time with The Big 3 and The Mugwumps as part of the Greenwich Village folk scene of the early '60s before fulfilling her destiny as the fourth member of The Mamas & The Papas and her subsequent solo career, Owen captures her mom's warmth and charisma through her vivid reservoir of shared memories.

Cass's lifelong struggles with her weight, her determination to raise Owen as a single parent, the internal dynamics of her relationship with Denny Doherty and John and Michelle Phillips, her ongoing health issues and the unconditional love she showered on her only child all shape this affectionate and revealing portrait of an inspirational mom and an unforgettably powerful vocalist.

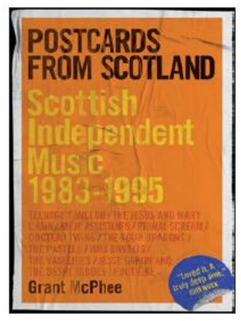
Grahame Bent

POSTCARDS FROM SCOTLAND

Grant McPhee

★★★★

OMNIBUS PRESS



Grant McPhee's 2021 oral history *Hungry Beat* acted as a companion piece to his documentary *Big Gold Dream.* Covering the initial post-punk years, it shone a new light on the often-forgotten heroes of an exciting period in Scotland's musical independence. Subsequent film *Teenage Superstars* continued the story through a post-Postcard, mid-80s rebirth.

This sister book similarly chronicles scenes emerging in Edinburgh and Glasgow via Belshill and East Kilbride. It uncovers the early Creation axis (Jesus & Mary Chain, Pastels), the consistently worthy 53rd&3rd label (Shop Assistants, Vaselines) and more besides. As with *Hungry Beat*, it does this via interviews with as many of the main and bit-part players as are here to tell the tale.

Your view will vary, depending on when (and if) you got on the bus, but for this writer it's a better read, telling its stories via first-hand accounts which capture the spirit of adventure, as well as the eventual despondency that often goes with the territory. Even the success stories (Primal Scream, Soup Dragons, Teenage Fanclub) come with a fair share of pathos as the wider industry comes calling or band members outlive their usefulness. The struggle to make music a viable option beyond the initial thrill looms large in the intertwined stories here, but this in an enjoyable ride through independent Scottish music of the era, and it will send you scurrying back to records, so many of which still sound refreshing and fearless.

Ben Phillipson

PEAT&DIESEL
JUNE 2024
17 BLACKPOOL WATERLOO
18 HUDDERSFIELD PARISH
19 GRIMSBY DOCKS ACADEMY
21 MILTON KEYNES CRAUFURD ARMS

RISKEE AND THE RIDICULE
PLATINUM STATUE
UK TOUR JUNE 2024
JUNE
21 - CHINNERYS, SOUTHEND
22 - ACADEMY 3, MANCHESTER
23 - THE CLUNY, NEWCASTLE
25 - STEREO, GLASGOW
26 - LENDING ROOM, LEEDS
27 - CLWB IFOR BACH, CARDIFF
28 - HOPE & RUIN, BRIGHTON
29 - 02 ACADEMY2, ISLINGTON

SWEET
PLAY
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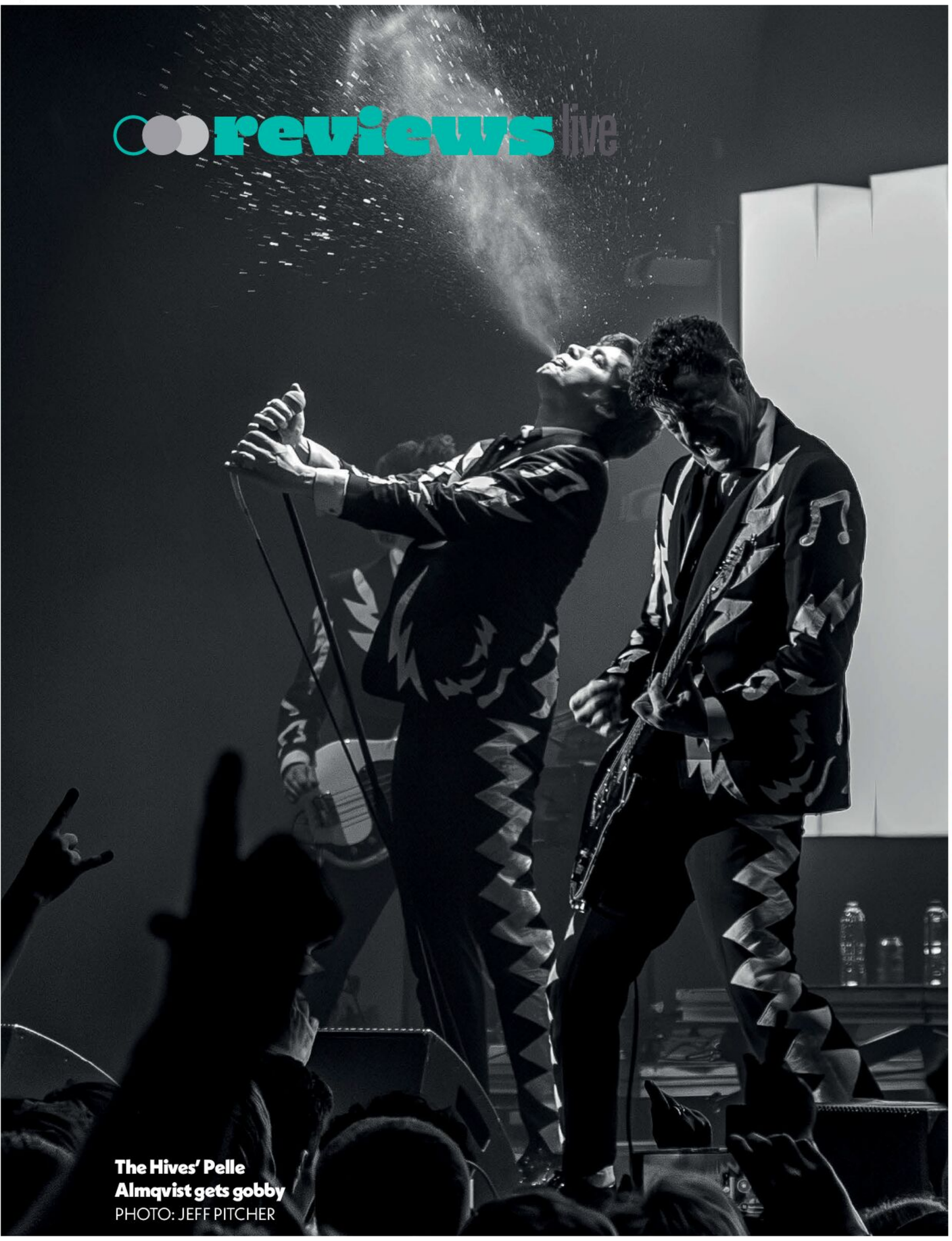
SWEET
DECEMBER 2024 - FULL CIRCLE PART II
FRIDAY 13 : WOLVERHAMPTON KK'S STEELMILL
SATURDAY 14 : LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY
SUNDAY 15 : HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME
WEDNESDAY 18 : FROME CHEESE & GRAIN
THURSDAY 19 : NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
FRIDAY 20 : NORWICH WATERFRONT

27 JUL ULVERSTON
THE CORO
30 AUG WARRINGTON
PARR HALL
17 DEC SUNDERLAND
THE FIRE STATION
22 DEC WOLVERHAMPTON
THE WULFRUN
"CLASSIC ROCK IN THE COMPANY OF TWO ROCK LEGENDS AND THEIR BAND !"
Kokoh & Robert

HUGH CORNWELL
ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR TOUR
NOVEMBER 2024
20 READING SUB 89
21 LEEDS OLD WOOLLEN
22 EDINBURGH QUEENS HALL
23 SUNDERLAND FIRE STATION
27 SOUTHAMPTON THE BROOK
28 LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM
29 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
30 NORTHAMPTON ROADMENDER
MOJO 4/4 STARS - "CORNWELL'S STILL DOING THINGS HIS WAY AND OFTEN WITH STRIKING RESULTS"

THE MISSION
D-TOUR 24
HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME
THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER
FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER
CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION
SATURDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

Very Special Guests
EXTC



The Hives' Pelle Almqvist gets gobby
PHOTO: JEFF PITCHER

Lenny Kaye is lifted aloft (top); Clive 'Doctor' Jackson. 'Mr Pharmacist' anyone?
PHOTOS: RICHIE YATES

THE HIVES

The Dome, Brighton

WEDNESDAY 3RD APRIL

2023 was a honeyed year for The Hives. They gleefully supported then stole the show from The Arctic Monkeys, smashed-and-grabbed at Glastonbury, while their album *The Death Of Randy Fitzsimmons* came close to topping the UK album charts. It was a devastatingly effective assault, garnering them new, fresh-faced fans, giving their fiercely loyal fanbase built through online "world tours" through lockdown a real-life taste of the band, and bringing massive grins to those who'd been rooting for them since the '90s.

Tonight, they showcase all that makes them the biggest garage-rock band in the world: drum-tight chops, hilariously catchy pop melodies, plus a buffed-and-honed performance. Pelle's between-song is as pin-sharp as ever; tonight he waxes lyrical about the venue's musical past ("On this very night, 50 years ago, ABBA – from Sweden – won the Eurovision song contest in this very room. Tonight, you will witness another Swedish band winning at The Brighton Dome! How does it feel to be here on this historic occasion?")

It's rare that a band has this many smashes up their (well-tailored) sleeves. 'Main Offender' skips by as the second song in the set, while 'Hate To Say I Told You So' comes surprisingly early. There are some rare-ish treats; 2012's 'Take Back The Toys' gets an airing and 'Won't Be Long' is a lesser-known gem. Pelle has the crowd rapt, crowing like Peter Pan, baiting, laughing with them and finally, during an incendiary, extended 'Tick Tick Boom' splitting them down the middle, crouching down, then bringing the crowd leaping to their feet, a climactic rush before the lights come up and Carly Simon's purring tones flood the theatre.

With only one major show booked in the UK this summer, the band's attention seems predominantly focused on the States. But don't worry, the UK still has the group's official franchise bands, one of whom – The Hive Fives – a chunk of the audience rush to see at a small venue round the corner after the Dome show. But will America roll over and succumb to this Imperial-phase Hives? Let's hope so. Because – truly – nobody does it better.

Kate Hodges

LENNY KAYE'S NUGGETS ANNIVERSARY SHOW

100 Club, London

FRIDAY 5TH APRIL

Lenny Kaye, in rockingly good shape for 74, and resplendent in lovely floral shirt, reads to tonight's rapt 350 capacity crowd of seasoned afficionados about the spark of vibrating guitar strings hitting him like lightning as he grew up with rock 'n' roll. It's an intensely personal moment, and why not – after all, this is his show, marking the 52nd anniversary of an album all Shindiggers will have been touched and transformed by in the same way those seminal 1965-68 psych tracks touched him, the true keeper of the psychedelic faith.

From this point in his reflective measured tone is swapped for '60s AM radio-jock couplets ("He's alive, and that ain't no jive!") as Mr Kaye reverts back to his younger fanboy self and leads the star-studded "Core Golden Jubilee Nuggets Band" with glee into the album's two openers 'I Had Too Much To Dream' (Rat Scabies reprising his "Nick Detroit" role of 40 years previously) and 'Dirty Water' featuring Derek Cruz wailing on harp and the first appearance of the two tirelessly grooving go-go dancers Moana and Hélène.

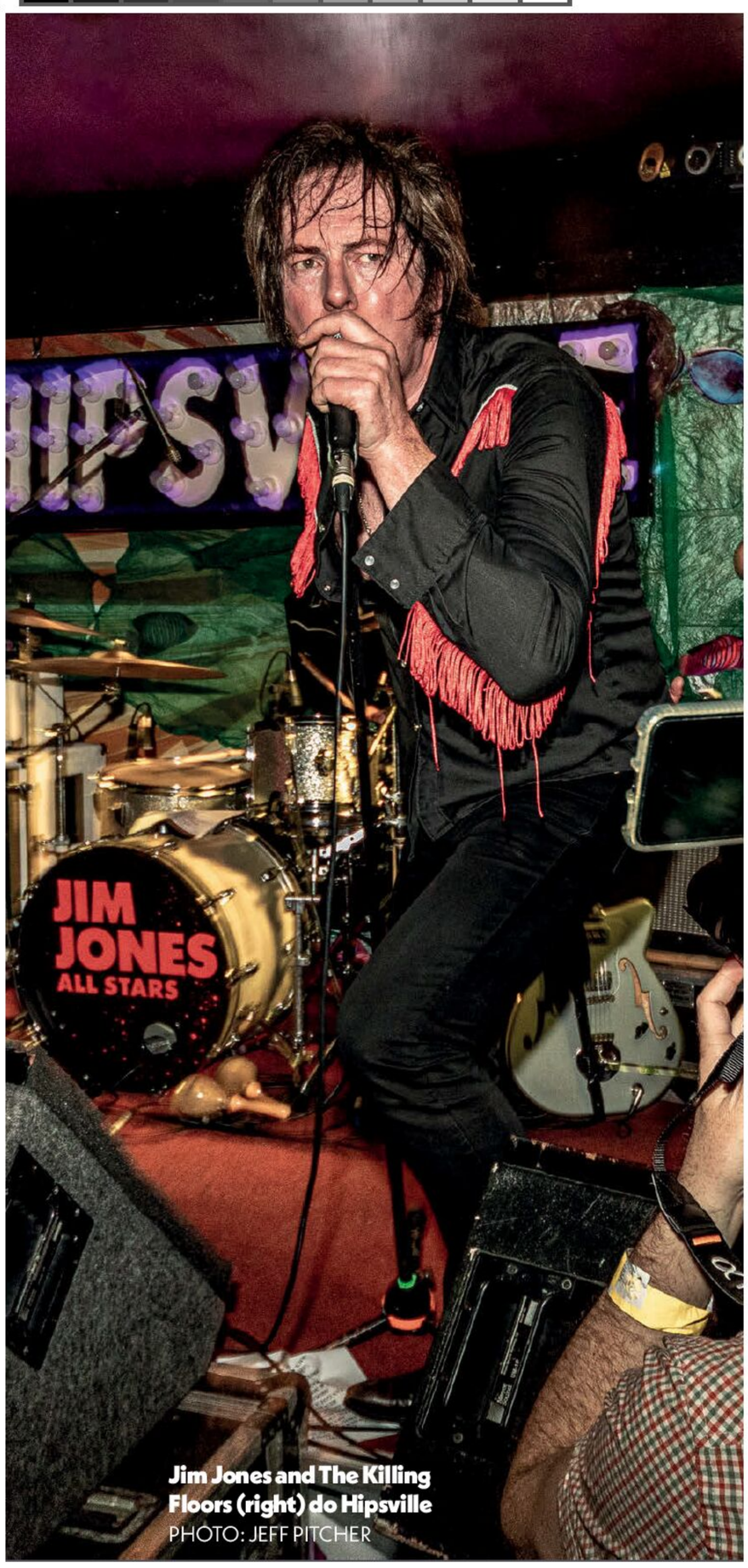
Next, Clive 'Doctor' Jackson, the first of tonight's innumerable special guests, sings 'My Little Red Book', and the album's tracklist is thrown out the window, as we're blasted against the back wall of The 100 Club by a two 1/2 hour set – "Oh my God, it's one hit after another!" as Lenny exclaims at one point, before launching poignantly into his very own '66 single 'Crazy Like A Fox' as Link Cromwell...

Impossible to pick out highlights, but special mentions must go to Jim Jones, ripping it up on guitar and vox throughout; Billy Shinbone's duelling with Mr Kaye on 'Interstellar Overdrive', which quickly enters a Can 'Mother Sky' vibe and back again, Amanda Cross for stepping up the intensity on 'Roadrunner', Peter Coyne's menacing Creation cover, a 'Psychotic Reaction' with an apocalyptic mid-song rave-up, and Go Ogahmi's fantastic psych-blues soloing on his version of The Amboy Dukes' 'Baby Please Don't Go'.

The night ends with 'Louie Louie' (of course) then 'Pushin; Too Hard', a thrilling 'I Wanna Be Your Dog' – shirtless Lenny crowdsurfing with sleigh bells; continuing the high-energy Detroit theme with 'Kick Out The Jams', then finally 'Gloria', the ultimate garage anthem but also sweet reference to Lenny's post-*Nuggets* musical evolution with The Patti Smith Group, the quintessential choice with which to end an absolutely stunning night.

Stephen Wood

"Pelle has the crowd rapt, crowing like Peter Pan, baiting, laughing with them and finally, during an incendiary, extended 'Tick Tick Boom' splitting them down the middle, crouching down, then bringing the crowd leaping to their feet"



Jim Jones and The Killing Floors (right) do Hipsville
PHOTO: JEFF PITCHER

A CELEBRATION OF GLOBAL UNDERGROUND PSYCHEDELIA

New river studios, london

TUESDAY 16TH APRIL

There's an expectant buzz among the many gathered tonight to celebrate the launch of *Moof* magazine's splendid 12th issue. Team *Moof* have vibed-up the venue psychedelic warehouse party-style; dangling silver stars, pearly balloons, wall coverings and projectors galore, setting the scene nicely for a merger of Chile's A Full Cosmic Sound and Dublin's Little Gem Band.

Saxes, cello, bass, guitars, keys, drums, synths, flute, whistles and vocals combine to create long improvised pieces, moving from Pharaoh Sanders Thembi-era atmospherics through stomping boogie and shuffling breakbeats, in and out of the eye of the storm, mystical intonations, ramped-up ritualistic crescendos and then gentle landings on *Saucerful Of Secrets* eiderdowns. A thrilling journey.

Japan's Barbican Estate have a sound like their namesake housing development; toweringly monumental with peaceful spaces and easy to get lost in, featuring beautiful soaring vocals from bassist/flautist/Mellotron player Miri, who, together with guitarist/sitarist Kazuki Toneri and borrowed drummer Sparrow Flint are as visually arresting as they are sonically, especially when they rock out to the noisier climactic moments of their enthralling shoegaze/psych maelstrom; incredible stuff.

Mermaid Chunky start with Freya Tate's early-Floyd keyboards overlaid with Moina Moin's spoken-word narratives, getting woozier and further out pretty fast, morphing through arpeggiated fairground synth-skank with Moina's dubby lunar sax-playing; elsewhere there's live-looped vox and instruments (including beautiful recorder rounds on current single 'Céilí') dancefloor bass/drum anthems, medieval *a capella*, and a potentially litigious Christmas song; an incredibly bright, vibrant and, above all, playful and joyous set, culminating in their dancers (all in matching bonnets) invading the crowd to dance with us.

Stephen Wood

HIPSVILLE

The Lido, Margate

FRIDAY 3RD TO SUNDAY 5TH MAY

Every May Bank holiday, the sunniest, funniest garage-and-beyond party in the UK cranks into action. As ever, star of the weekend is the gleeful creativity and enthusiasm of the bands, deejays, go-go dancers and – most importantly – audience at this seaside riot. This year, the theme is "From The Deep", so everyone dives into their treasure chests of costumes to fill the venue with rock lobsters, jumping jellyfish, divers, and creatures from the blackest lagoons.

First to bubble up on Friday are The Chiff-Chaffs from Belgium. Their heads-down, seafoam-flecked surf and garage warms up the water nicely ahead of tonight's buccaneer headliners, The Jim Jones All Stars. Tonight, their maxi-length, full-throttle set sets the perfect party tone. They play a canny mix of covers and originals; a simmering, grooving 'Parchman Farm', the Velvets' 'Run Run Run' cranked up with double sax sit alongside originals such 'Gimme The Grease'.

Saturday's party on the pier is – as always – soused in sun, The Mirage Men sand dance onto the rooftop of the Tikiville bar, and treat an unsuspecting Margate to an afternoon blast of instrumental, ancient Egyptian-themed surf.

Back at The Lido, tonight feels like a showdown of sorts. Young LA pups The Killing Floors are as trad garage as it gets: bone necklaces? Check! Cute mushroom haircuts? Check! Nifty vintage gear? Double check! A bushy-tailed energy courses through every song; highlights are single 'Too Far Gone' and an urgent 'The Way She Moves'. A final run through garage classic 'Shake' and they're off, all grins and sweat. Catch them when they're back over. In contrast, Canada's Gruesomes have been goofing it up on stages on-and-off since the mid-80s. Tonight, alongside some wincingly brilliant fish puns, there's a slew of original hits – 'Fluctuation' and 'Leave My Kitten Alone' alongside the covers they're perhaps best known for, including 'Unchain My Heart', 'You're No Good' (with added Fernando Terror on keyboards) and, of course, '1-2-5'. However, on points, the LA upstarts nudge a victory. Rounding off the bill are Wigan's own The Stags, with their now-traditional set of theme related covers. Of course, they start with the Quo's 'Down Down', naturally they play an undersea version of the theme from *Rocky* rebranded as 'The Eye Of The Diver' and how could they not play a seaweedy take on 'Help!': 'Kelp!'? And truly, you haven't lived until you've seen a man in pink Speedos singing "Red Light Spells Danger' and a pair of giant sea creatures fighting to 'If The Squids Are United'. Until next year...

Kate Hodges

J MASCIS

The Garage, Glasgow

FRIDAY 10TH MAY

You might think a solo performance from one man guitar blizzard J Mascis would mean a mellow and less out there experience might be on offer. Think again. Shorn of his usual wall of Marshall stacks and instead relying on a solitary Vox AC30, J uses his famously out-sized pedal board to transform the sonics of his amplified acoustic guitar with a barrage of fuzz, distortion, reverb and howling overdrive, which at times sails close to the sound of Crazy Horse at full crank.

Greeting the crowd with his customary "Thanks for comin' out," J looks every inch the far-out sage meets recluse caught in the spotlight. Dinosaur Jr's 'Blowin' It' kicks things off with 'You Don't Understand Me' from J's latest solo waxing *What Do We Do Now* up next before the ante is dramatically raised with further excursions into Dino territory – a highly energised 'Little Fury Things', a suitably spacy 'Out There', a stirringly scuzzed-up 'Repulsion' and later, by way of a finale, a resonantly spectral 'Alone', where it feels like J summons up the spirit of Jimi Hendrix. Besides the selections from the Dinosaur Jr and J Mascis solo songbooks the show also features covers of Phoebe Bridges' 'Motion Sickness', Greg Sage & The Wipers' 'On The Run' and Mazzy Star's 'Fade Into You'. Ever the reticent artiste, come the end J simply raises his hand and walks off stage. Even when J goes solo Dinosaur Jr are an inseparable part of the equation.

Grahame Bent

Alessandro Alessandroni / Giovanni Tommaso

Open Air Parade

SR, ITALY, 1972

COVER PAINTING BY ERNST WILHELM NAY

CHRISTOPHER BUDD unearths one man's mission to trace the original artwork for some of Italian library music's Holy Grails

Library music – written and recorded speculatively for use in radio, TV, and film – was never really meant to be made available to the general public. During the golden age of the '50s, '60s and '70s, some music libraries realised that meant they could make do with beyond-minimalist covers, however iconic – what KPM spent on green ink for their 1000 Series they must have saved on designers' fees. Others – Bruton, France's Tele-Music – adopted simple layouts and colour-coding to help editors find the sounds they were looking for. But a few labels, including Italy's SR Records, bucked the trend and went all out for big colourful sleeve images.

In the intervening years of course, library music has been re-marketed to a public fascinated by unearthing the half-forgotten sounds of their old media memories, and keen to dig deeper into the often-amazing musicianship of many of the talents involved. After an initial flurry of compilations, reissue labels are now making former Holy Grails into brand new purchasable records, complete with accurately reproduced cover artwork. Yet for those originally tasked with packaging up these discs all those years ago, the usual rules of visual design were unimportant. No need to be eye-catching on the racks, and no need to cater to egos. The artists weren't famous rock stars (in *most* cases) so an image of them would have been pointless. In fact, they often don't even get their name on the album cover. What better then, than to licence – hopefully cheaply – an existing image that already captures the feel of the music somehow, and to sell instead of an artist or a concept, a *feeling*. The flowery sleeve of Alessandro Alessandroni's much-loved *Open Air Parade* is one such example, using an image by German painter Ernst Wilhelm Nay.

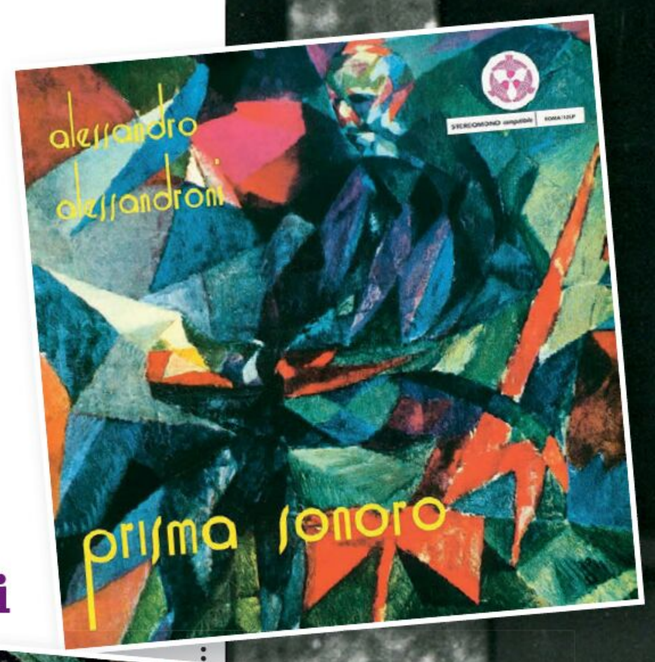
Nay died four years before this album was pressed in 1972. Hugely important in the world of German mid-century modernist painters, he'd nevertheless exhibited only sparingly outside his home country. The image chosen for the cover of *Open Air Parade* is a 180-degree rotated crop of Nay's '58 oil painting *Akkord In Rot Und Blau* (*Chord In Red And Blue*), from the absolute zenith of the artist's "Scheibenbildern" period, in which he explored the form of circular discs almost exclusively – and prolifically.

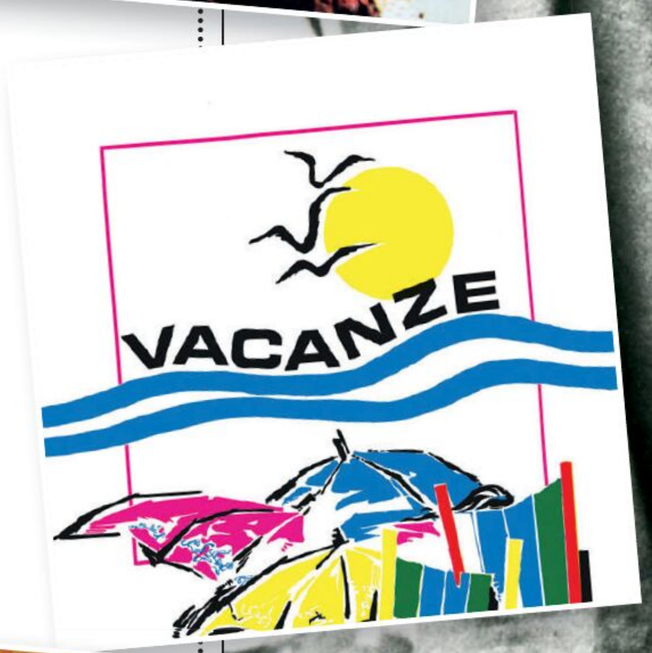
John Henriksson, who has curated the new reissue of *Open Air Parade* for Italy's Sonor Music Editions, tells us exactly what restoring the record's artwork entailed. "Unfortunately, there's very little documentation and residue preserved about this release," he explains, "and from other Italian library music releases in general. In the case of *Open Air Parade*, you're lucky enough if you're able to put your hands on a copy of the original release that changes hands for well over €1000 – if they surface. This applies to many releases from the legendary Sermi Records catalogue, which is considered as one of the most collectible Italian library labels." John picks out a string of musical and visual highlights from SR: Alessandroni's *Prisma Sonoro* and his two self-titled "butterfly" albums; Girolamo Ugolini's *Nel Mondo Del Lavoro*; Rino De Filippi and Alessandroni's *Vacanze*; Tommaso's *Indefinitive Atmosphere*; and Tomasso and Stefano Torossi's *Echoing America*. "These albums not only contain some of the most beautiful music in the genre (or all genres?)," he enthuses, "but their artwork is equally fascinating.

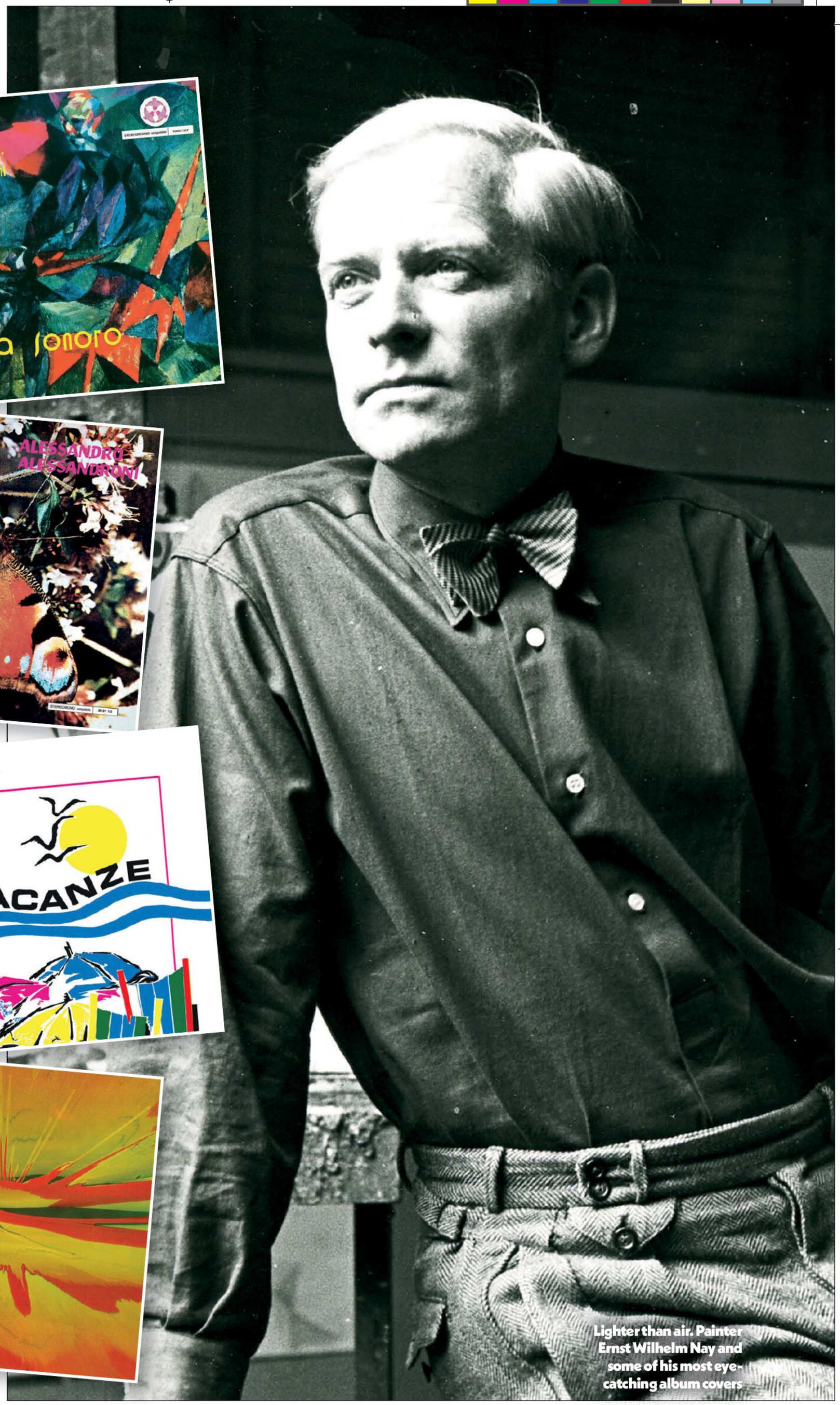
"For this 2024 reissue of *Open Air Parade* we used a current photo of Ernst Wilhelm Nay's *Chord In Red And Blue* in full fidelity, provided by Hamburger Kunsthalle/ Bridgeman Images, and licensed from Ernst Wilhelm Nay Stiftung [Nay's Foundation], in comparison to the original version of *Open Air Parade,* which depicts the painting in lower resolution. This issue shows *Open Air Parade* and *Chord In Red And Blue* in a never-before-seen light, as well as the skilfully-restored [audio] masters. It's the definitive version of this masterpiece.

"What this and many library records, as

“At the time it was probably a question of budget, and maybe time. Many of the Sermi covers were made just like *Open Air Parade*: cropped and rotated modern art with a simple typeface for the title”







Lighter than air. Painter Ernst Wilhelm Nay and some of his most eye-catching album covers

well as privately pressed music at that time, have in common is that they usually contain stock images wrapped with simple designs and bold typography,” John continues. “At the time it was probably a question of budget, and maybe time. Many of the Sermi covers were made just like *Open Air Parade*: cropped and rotated modern art with a simple typeface for the title. For example, the Sermi release *Rebus* displays cropped and rotated details of Franz Marc’s painting *Fighting Forms* from 1914, [Riccardo Luciani’s] *Musica Poliformale* a detail of Fernand Léger’s *Les Disques* from 1918, and so on. Whoever was the art director at Sermi had a great eye for composition!”

And even after spending so much time with the image, John is still fond of it. “I absolutely love it!” he exclaims. “It’s part of the music now and it can’t be separated. That’s why I find it so important to stay as true to the original ideas as possible when we work on the restoration of library releases for Sonor Music Editions.” Nor is it just Sonor to whom John lends his talents. “Library music and particularly the Sermi catalogue has been a huge inspiration for the work I’m doing on Piano Piano with Sven Wunder’s releases, where *Open Air Parade* – or rather Ernst Wilhelm Nay’s painting style – echoes on both *Eastern Flowers* and especially *Late Again*. It was actually while working on the artwork for *Late Again* that I came across a postcard containing Nay’s work that led me to finally find *Chord In Red And Blue*”.

Expressing his love for Johnny Trunk’s *The Music Library* and David Hollander’s *Unusual Sounds* as important texts for library music lovers, John nevertheless has a project he’d love to see someone realise, and it is a tantalising idea. “I hope that someone creates a book that contains all the original photos, images and paintings used for library music releases,” he muses. “It would be great to have a book or a chapter dedicated only to Piero Umiliani’s library music catalogue, which contains incredible artworks. There is likely a lot of original material still available.”

“One last thing,” adds John before departing, like Italian library music’s answer to Columbo. “I’m desperately searching for the titles of paintings displayed on *Utopia* by Sandro Brugnolini (probably by the Belgian painter Michel Seuphor) and *Prisma Sonoro* by Alessandro Alessandroni (probably by the Italian painter Umberto Boccioni)”. Can you help? Any art history buffs out there with any clues, drop us a line. S!

Alessandro Alessandroni and Giovanni Tommaso’s Open Air Parade is out now on Sonor Music Editions

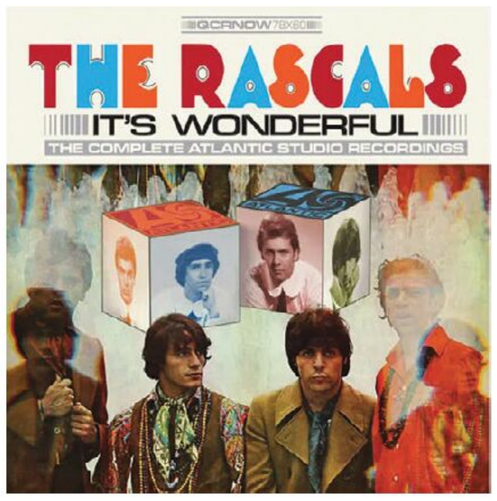
Prize Crossword

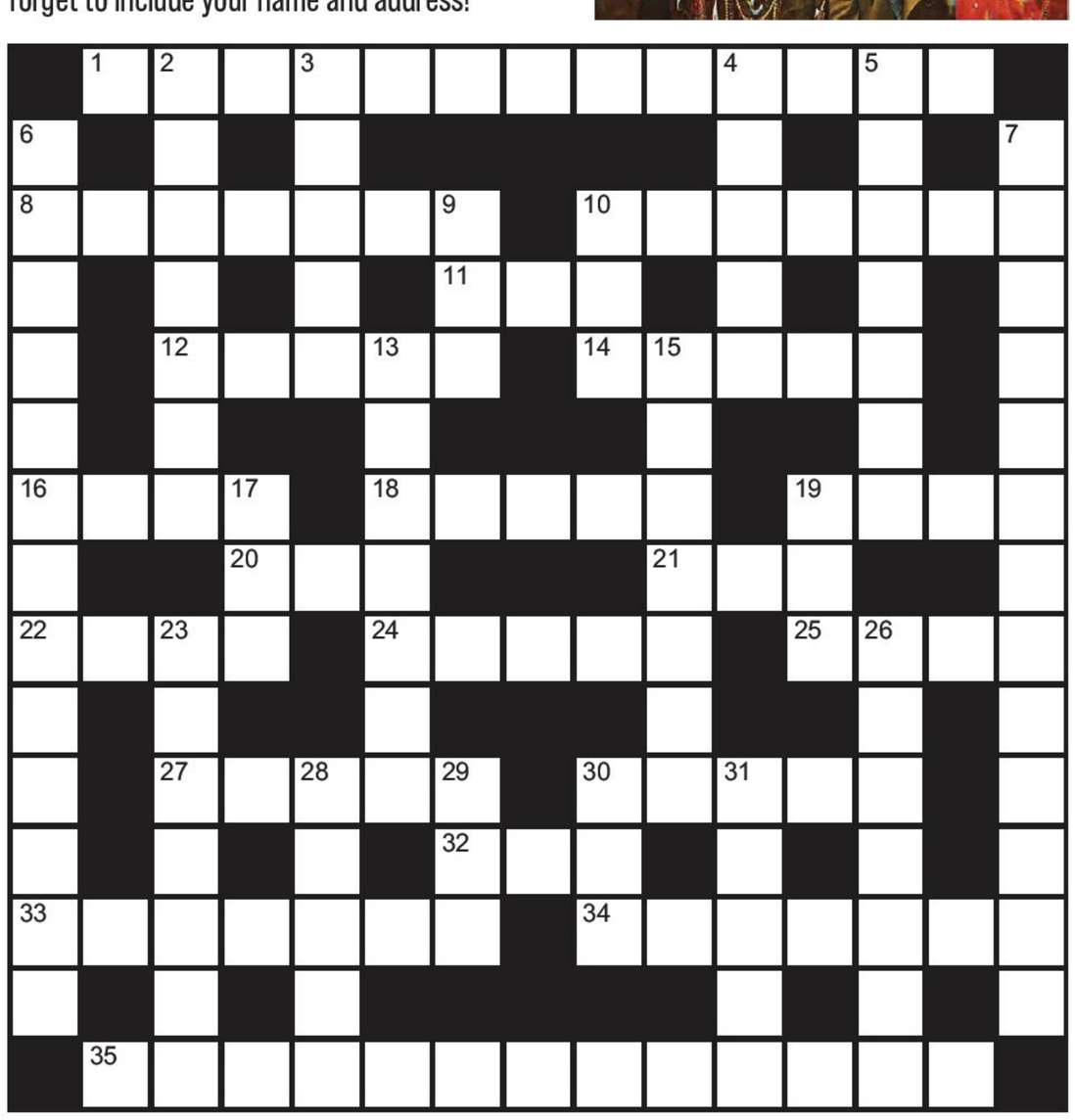
by Stuart Draper

You've read the first part of our in-depth story of **THE RASCALS** this issue, now you can dive into their extensive work courtesy of Now Sounds' ***IT'S WONDERFUL: THE COMPLETE ATLANTIC STUDIO RECORDINGS***. The seven-CD set contains all seven of the group's 1966-71 albums – the first four in their mono and stereo mixes – alongside non-album singles, edits, alternate versions and previously unheard out-takes. The richly-annotated, photo-filled booklet containing a new essay and interviews seals the deal.

And we have a copy to give away.

To enter, simply send your completed crossword to *Shindig!* #152 Crossword, 40 Windsor Crescent, Frome, Somerset BA11 2EA or email a legible scan of it to win@shindig-magazine.com with the words "S! #152 crossword competition" in the subject line, no later than 4th July. And don't forget to include your name and address!





Across

1 Reviewed last issue on its 50th anniversary, Robin Trower builds song section with magnitude sound (6,2,5)
8 Forum in disarray ahead of Jim James' distortion (7)
10 This was Jethro Tull's first album (don't look it up, I've told you the answer) (4,3)
11 The Brian Jonestown Massacre include their own EP (3)
12 Kramer gave his name away needlessly in there (5)
14 I'm on a shaky start with cottage singer Lewis (5)
16 Axton man puts only edges in forthright finale (4)
18 Drama is due from Pedrum Siadatian, mixture makes moniker (5)
19 The End got it made, however slightly (4)
20 Motion of Temples trails cropped photo (3)
21 San Fran couple desire arduous heart to follow moon (3)
22 As burns embraces representative, lacks oxygen with Natalie Jane Hill (4)
24 Groovy Glenn Prangnell is largely unclean (5)
25 Well-chosen without cellos, before Joanie smiles on Rare Earth tune (4)
27 Original woman in Norwich postcode – an everyday thing shadows with Springfield Park or Granny's Intentions (5)
30 The Poets finish in your rewritten wrote (5)
32 Extravagant centre of Nancy Sinatra's stepmother (3)
33 Left-handed beginnings fulfil TV cook after Grapefruit's dear (7)
34 Important drum kit sees dock surround sleep phase (7)
35 Combining sculpture with tailorings, this actor happens! (5,8)

Down

2 Jim follows track for track for Barnaby Rudge (7)
3 Toad brings childish excrement with The Cryan' Shames (5)
4 Munster Pastor has colour lacking White Denim's fourth (5)
5 Once in a while alien leaves in turmoil, while The Tokens ponder what Emerson band do (3,4)
6 Label badly bared odd crush in your very hands (6,7)
7 I snuck on earth foolishly for Ed Askew cryptozoology question (3,3,7)
9 Tucker stands up for edited homoeroticism (3)
10 Count on The Teardrop Explodes to run for cover, often ending in there somewhere (3)
13 This system's most distant completes the collection for The Entourage Music & Theatre Ensemble (7)
15 Ray Manzarek raced to fresh fandango opening (3,4)
17 Insert lengthy coda once King Crimson get bearings from Donovan (3)
19 Album #2 was profiled in issue 143 – and contained in this clue – an astonishing sound (3)
23 I'll follow van before a largely fudged conclusion (7)
26 Curtis is hardworking... although lacks actual work (7)
28 Rivalling within The Four Seasons' frontman (5)
29 The Royal Albert Hall, initially, colloquially (3)
30 Juxtaposed in part as CCS turns on the water (3)
31 Take sting out of whitenings, Eric Burdon was young after all (4,1)

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Issue 151 crossword solution

1 I	A	M	T	2 H	E	3 B	L	4 A	C	5 K	G	O	L	6 D
N	■	■	■	E	■	L	■	N	■	A	■	■	■	O
7 I	N	F	8 E	R	N	O	■	9 D	A	Y	10 G	L	O	W
T	■	■	W	■	■	N	■	S	■	■	E	■	■	A
F	■	11 B	A	C	K	D	O	O	R	M	A	12 N	■	H
13 O	P	E	N	■	■	I	■	O	■	■	14 R	O	A	D
R	■	N	■	15 E	T	E	16 R	N	A	17 L	■	N	■	I
18 T	H	E	I	D	■	■	E	■	■	19 I	M	S	A	D
H	■	F	■	20 D	E	21 A	D	22 M	A	N	■	T	■	D
23 E	X	I	24 T	■	■	N	■	A	■	■	25 C	O	D	Y
M	■	26 T	H	U	N	D	E	R	C	L	A	P	■	D
O	■	■	E	■	■	T	■	S	■	■	N	■	■	I
27 N	E	S	M	28 I	T	H	■	29 B	A	30 S	T	A	R	D
E	■	■	■	K	■	E	■	A	■	E	■	■	■	D
31 Y	O	U	M	E	A	N	D	R	E	A	L	I	T	Y

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13th JULY
LIVERPOOL
O2 ACADEMY2

SATURDAY
20th JULY
LONDON
O2 SHEPHERD'S
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THU 22nd AUG LONDON O2 SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE

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08 MANCHESTER GORILLA
09 LEEDS THE OLD WOOLLEN
15 PAISLEY THE BUNGALOW
16 NEWCASTLE THE CLUNY
22 HITCHIN CLUB 85
23 SOUTHAMPTON
ENGINE ROOMS
29 BRIGHTON THE ARCH
30 CHESTER THE LIVE ROOMS
DECEMBER
06 LONDON
O2 ACADEMY ISLINGTON
07 NORTHAMPTON
THE BLACK PRINCE
13 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY2
20 LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY

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Fri 25 Oct SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY
Sat 26 Oct LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY
Fri 08 Nov BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
Sat 30 Nov MANCHESTER O2 RITZ
Fri 20 Dec OXFORD O2 ACADEMY2
Sat 21 Dec BOURNEMOUTH O2 ACADEMY
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Fri 24 Jan NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL

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FRI 11 OCT LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY2
FRI 18 OCT SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY2
2025
FRI 17 JAN NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL

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vinyl clicks

In which **MICHAEL BJÖRN** investigates worthy albums that have somehow eluded reissue, compilation or acclaim

ANN ODELL
A Little Taste
(DJM, UK 1973)

Ann's school only allowed pupils to bring matchbox-sized toys. Little Ann opted for spiders and creepy-crawlies. Her father, engineer and partner at a die-cast company, decided instead to make her a scaled-down road roller. It became popular at school, Matchbox Toys was born and some of the wealth was later spent on Ann's musical career and education at The Royal Academy Of Music, where she met others who wanted to experiment.

"Pete Robinson introduced me," remembers arranger Martyn Ford. "Ann had an amazing apartment near St John's Wood in London, overlooking Regents Park." There they met with Ann's then boyfriend John Gustafson, Tony Walmsley, Morris Pert and many others. "We used to go up to Ann's house, get wrecked and play lots of music."

One outcome was the *Harroidan Event #1* tapes, eventually released as Sphincter Ensemble. "We just got together to jam at The Harrods Club in Barnes close to where Paul Buckmaster and I lived," says Ford. Although made just prior to *A Little Taste*, it's extremely different. "They couldn't be more poles apart!"

By the time of her solo debut, Ann had certainly covered a lot of musical ground. Having started out with Ivy Benson's all-female jazz orchestra, she had recorded a jazz standards album in 1966 and two albums with Hammond organ pop remakes under the thinly veiled pseudonym Anna Dell.

"Her voice is a bit too cute in a way," Ford says of *A Little Taste*. "There's nothing that leaps out as being a hit. Maybe that's why it faded into oblivion." Another reason might be Ann's disappointment with the music industry. On 'Non-Commercial Blues', Ann recounts her struggles with selling art for money, with lines like "Hooks are for musical hookers." She would revisit the track with both Blue Mink and Chopyn. "It seems very descriptive of how she felt towards playing pop music," says her son Will Spurling. "Deep down she didn't like herself very much." Despite her inner demons, Ann managed to pull together a stellar cast for the sessions. "The line-up is like the who's who of London session musicians in the '70s," agrees Ford. "And you can hear her budding talent for arranging."

Although there were plans to make a follow-up, Ann's manager ended them by ripping her off and disappearing with the money.

Ann was introduced to Buddhism by Animals guitarist Hilton Valentine, who had befriended her in a pub in Hampstead. "Through her Buddhist practise, she had a complete turnaround in attitude towards herself in later years, and was really proud of the work she'd done," says Will. It's time to recognise *A Little Taste* for what it is – a beautiful yet complex pop album, with all self-penned material exposing the challenges of being a woman in the music business.

Ann Odell recording *A Little Taste*

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Summer Sounds

JON 'MOJO' MILLS considers how best to stream our latest two "summer special" Qobuz playlists

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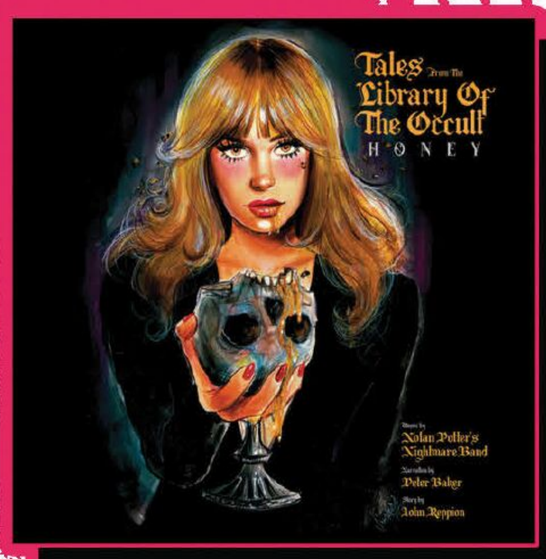

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